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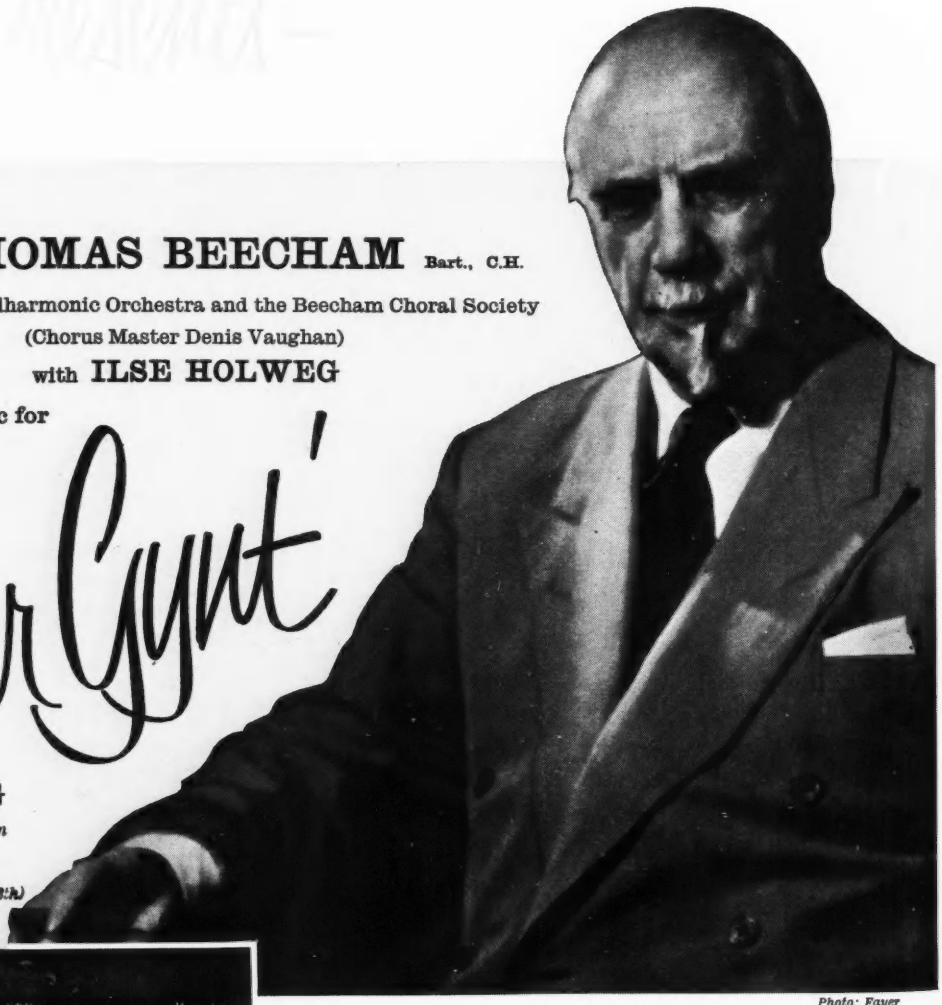

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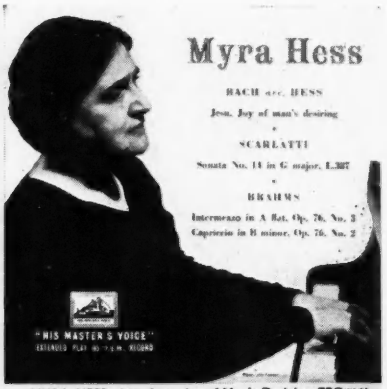

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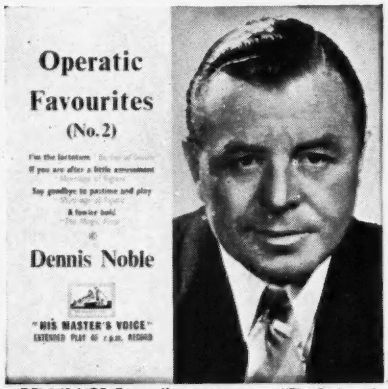

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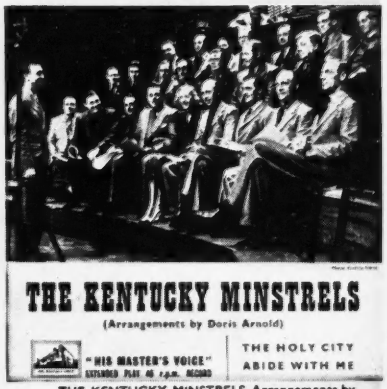

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mood of the first movement, indeed, was characterised by Brahms as that of "a man about to shoot himself, since nothing else remains for him to do". As with many of his works, Brahms brooded over this quartet for a long time: the first and third movements (the former originally in C sharp minor) date from 1855, the original scherzo from even earlier; but this scherzo was replaced, and a finale added, as late as 1873.

A scratch team even of star players can frequently be disappointing; but the four distinguished artists here work admirably together in true chamber-music style—a part is never spotlit at the expense of the whole. The balance is excellent (and full marks here to the engineers), the tone warm and full but clear (Tortelier's solo at the start of the *Andante* is glorious); and there is throughout a real sense of performance, beside which an occasional small flaw of ensemble fades into unimportance. I have but two critical comments to make on this otherwise impressive performance. Szigeti's fast vibrato doesn't match Tortelier's (very noticeable in the *Andante*); and, though no one wants to rush Brahms, some tempi here tend to be ponderous—the *Sturm-und-Drang* beginning of the work, for example, taken at dotted minim 60, is certainly *non troppo allegro*, but is it even *allegro* at all? L.S.

FAURE. Trio in D minor, Op. 120.
RAVEL. Trio in A minor. The Beaux-Arts Trio (Daniel Guilet, violin; Bernard Greenhouse, 'cello; Menahem Pressler, piano). Parlophone PMC1035 (12 in., 35s. 10d.).
Ravel Trio:
Rubinstein, Heifetz, Piatigorsky (11/52) ALP1009

The music of Fauré's old age has a curious remoteness, as though the composer had completely abstracted himself from the world of his day, which, as far as this piano trio is concerned, means the world of 1924, the year of his death. Many of his early piano pieces and songs have a lunar quality, but in them the moon is seen from the earth, whereas in his last nocturnes and barcarolles the composer himself seems poised in space, the earth at least as far from him as its satellite. It is not always easy for the listener to follow him in these remote works of his late seventies. Did he plan them in the conventional sense? The first movement of this trio sounds at first like an extemporisation, as though the composer were doodling and never very sure what he was going to do next. This mundane reaction is not entirely dispelled by repeated hearings, though, to pursue the metaphor, a lunar reaction becomes increasingly reasonable. The slow movement is the easiest to come to terms with, and for me much the most beautiful; I do not think the finale quite comes off, but the whole work has a queer fascination even though you may here and there question its validity.

Of the Ravel there can be no two opinions. This surely is the most successful piano trio of the century, perhaps the only successful attempt at this difficult medium. Perhaps the end is too orchestral, but the new sonorities and rhythms that abound in the body of the work make for exhilarating listening. The very first bars, for piano solo, are irresistible with their 3-3-2 rhythm. The Beaux-Arts Trio play it magnificently, and though I found one or two of the quiet 'cello tunes too strong, the ensemble and spirit of these players seemed to me finer than on the rival disc with its very distinguished soloists. The newer recording is, as might be expected, much the better.

R.F.

JANACEK. Concertino for Piano, two Violins, Viola, Clarinet, Bassoon and Horn (*a*). **Mládi—Suite for Woodwind Sextet** (*b*). **Members of the Philadelphia Woodwind Quintet** (William Kincaid, flute (*b*); John de Lancie, oboe (*b*); Anthony Gigliotti, clarinet (*a* & *b*); Sol Schoenbach, bassoon (*a* & *b*); Mason Jones, horn (*a* & *b*)); with Jacob Krachmalnick and David Madison, violins (*a*); Samuel Lifschey, viola (*a*); Leon Lester, bass clarinet (*b*)); and in (*a*) **Rudolf Firkusny** (piano). Philips ABR4057 (10 in., 30s. 11d.).

Even with the experience behind me of Villa-Lobos's *Nonet* (for eight instruments, percussion section and mixed chorus), I found the mathematical implications of this label more than a little confusing at first. Two different sextets, comprising nine performers in all, three of them string players, in a woodwind quintet . . . ? I worked it out eventually, but this obviously is not the clearest way of giving the artists their credits.

Both these works of Janacek's maturity have been recorded before—the *Concertino* indeed by the same soloist, Firkusny—but in each case this is the first issue to be normally available in this country. Since so much depends on the public's first impression of a work, it is good to be able to report that these are excellent performances, which should do much to help a true understanding of Janacek's curiously personal style, well characterised by Gerald Abraham as "laconic, ejaculatory and elliptical". Despite a rather patronising remark in the new *Grove* that the string sextet entitled *Mladi* (*Youth*) is "vivacious, if somewhat trivial", it is in fact a fresh, attractive and highly original work, which would serve as an admirable introduction to this composer. The instrumentation is ingenious, and the repetition of tiny thematic figures in a kind of mosaic builds up into a convincing whole: at the end of the work one turns back to the beginning with a new insight into the composer's idiom, so unlike that of anyone else. The recording and the playing are superlative: rarely have I heard a wind team with such perfection of ensemble, purity of intonation, and sensitivity of phrasing and dynamics.

The *Concertino* on the reverse is a tougher proposition altogether. The instrumentation is eccentric (the long dialogue between piano and horn in the first movement is a strange conception), the manner abrupt, the relentless working of a single thematic germ to the exclusion of all else curious, the whole layout disconcertingly heterodox. And yet one senses a forceful and unique personality behind it all: this is a composer one cannot just ignore. Firkusny, who has done more than anyone to make Janacek's work known, emerges triumphantly from the ungrateful solo part, and he is excellently backed up by the rest of the ensemble. The recording is slightly less good on this side: the piano's fortissimos clang rather, and there is a whopping pre-echo before the last movement. But no intelligent music-lover will let this put him off. L.S.

MOZART. Three Divertimenti for String Orchestra: K.136 in D major; K.137 in B flat major; K.138 in F major. **Serenata Notturna, K.239. Solisti di Zagreb** directed by **Antonio Janigro.** Vanguard PVL7041 (12 in., 39s. 11½d.).
Three Divertimenti:
Munich Pro Art Chamber, Redel (6/55) OL50072

This is good, stylish, clean playing; Janigro, a fine 'cellist in his own right, understands the subtleties of string technique and evidently gets his message across to the players. Although Redel's performance is fair, his violinists tend to stiffness in phrasing now and again: in the Adagio of K.136, for instance. There is some clumsiness from the Munich players in the Finale of K.137 though elsewhere they play brilliantly. The Vanguard record will appeal on two counts—a finer overall performance of these three charming divertimenti, and the addition (at no extra charge!) of the Serenata Notturna for two orchestras. Here again, Janigro achieves a balance and subtlety which brings out clearly the contrast between the two groups of players.

D.S.

MOZART. Serenade No. 9 in D major, K.320, "Posthorn Serenade". Karl Benzinger (posthorn). **Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra** conducted by **Ferdinand Leitner.** D.G.G. DGM19088 (12 in., 41s. 8½d.).

MOZART. Serenade No. 9 in D major, K.320, "Posthorn". Serenade No. 6 in D major, K.238, "Serenata Notturna". Heinz Burum (posthorn). **Pro Musica Orchestra, Stuttgart,** conducted by **Edouard van Remoortel.** Vox PL9890 (12 in., 41s. 8½d.).
Suisse, Maag (6/52) LXT2671

Mozart's Posthorn Serenade—so named because there's a part for *corno di posta* in the second trio of the second minuet—is an enchanting work, and I can't think why it hasn't been more often recorded. It was written for some festive occasion (an important one, to judge by the presence of trumpets and drums in the orchestra) at the court of the Prince-archbishop of Salzburg in August, 1779, when Mozart was twenty-three. It contains seven movements. After a full-scale symphonic first movement for the full band (minus flutes) comes a minuet whose trio features solo flute and bassoon; then follows a group of three movements which use the wind instruments

in a much more elaborate *concertante* style—paired flutes, oboes and bassoons in the *andante grazioso* and the bubbling rondo, but oboes and bassoons only in the wistful D minor *andantino* which follows them ; then comes another minuet, this time with two trios, of which the second, as we have seen, features a posthorn, and the first a piccolo—but as Mozart omitted to fill the stave in in his autograph score it is played on both these discs as a rather unconvincing two-part piece for strings, in fact the accompaniment alone ! I can't help feeling that some expert Mozartian should take his courage in both hands and supply a piccolo part ; it really sounds rather ridiculous without. Mozart rounds the work off with a symphonic presto-finale, complete with Mannheim crescendos (he'd heard the Mannheim orchestra on his way to Paris two years before). Altogether a rich and varied work.

I very much enjoyed a recent record (PL9840) on which Eduard van Remoortel conducted music by Grieg, and that made his present performance all the more disappointing. Even the first chord is ragged, and the playing throughout is stodgy and insensitive, particularly when one compares it with the sparkling performance that Leitner secures on the Deutsche Grammophon disc. For me the crucial point turned out to be the fifth movement, the *andantino*. Admittedly it is the one minor-key section of the whole work, but to play it in the romantic, anguish-laden manner that Remoortel adopts seems to me utterly inept ; Leitner's performance, on the other hand, I found completely convincing. In fact, with the possible exception of an absolutely *prestissimo* finale, Leitner's tempi seem to me unfailingly just.

It must be admitted that the recording of the new D.G.G. disc is a little on the resonant side (so is the Vox, if it comes to that) and the strings of the Bavarian Radio Orchestra are too numerous for an ideal performance ; the flutes are also too close. But in spite of this I have no hesitation in preferring it to the Stuttgart performance under van Remoortel. As for the Serenata Notturna, which Vox offer as a bonus, there are already better performances available from Columbia and H.M.V. (cf. my review of May, 1957, for further details). The internal balance of the old Decca disc conducted by Peter Maag is perhaps better than either of these, but the over-all quality of sound is not attractive even on the newer pressings ; and in any case I don't feel that performance has the humour of the new Leitner one, which I recommend heartily to all lovers of the very best light music.

J.N.

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BACH. Sonatas for Solo Violin : No. 1 in G minor ; No. 2 in B minor (ALP1512) ; No. 3 in A minor ; No. 4 in D minor (ALP1531) ; No. 5 in C major ; No. 6 in E major (ALP1532). **Yehudi Menuhin** (violin). H.M.V. ALP1512, 1531-2 (three 12 in., 41s. 8½d. each).

Telmanyi (11/54) LXT2951-3
Martzy (3/56) (10/55) (11/55) 33CX1286-8
Heifetz (4/57) ALP1449-51

D.S.'s detailed comparative review in the April issue of these sonatas and partitas (how I wish E.M.I. would stick to the original nomenclature !) seems to me to give a very fair account of the relative merits of the three LP versions available before this new one appeared on the scene. The Telmanyi set is something slightly apart, since not all of us agree with his aims and/or methods, but as between the versions of Heifetz and Johanna Martzy I would have little hesitation in choosing the latter. For all Heifetz's elegance and rock-sure technique there is a quiet, relaxed confidence about Martzy's playing that suggests complete absorption in Bach's music. Each time I turned to her recording to compare it with the new one I found myself getting drawn into it, and not wanting to go back again to the other.

Menuhin's approach is diametrically opposed to Martzy's, and though I personally find it very unsympathetic I must try to do it justice. Menuhin is far too good a musician to be dismissed out of hand, and in any case although there are occasional slight technical lapses there is no question of incompetence about this playing. What Menuhin wants to do he is doing with power and conviction—one might even say dedication, I think. To him this music is a vehicle of expression (I was tempted to write " only a vehicle ", but that might imply a disrespect for Bach which I'm sure he would repudiate), and the notes are a kind of raw material on which the artist has to work, in order to express . . . what ? Himself, or his concept of Bach's intentions ? I'm not certain what the answer would be, and it's a crucial question. The relation between composer and performer is an extremely difficult one to define, and moreover it varies with each individual case. Where Liszt's virtuoso piano writing may simply demand to be " projected ", " put over "—it's difficult to find an unambiguous phrase—Bach's solo violin writing, for all its terrifying difficulty, may be more entirely self-sufficient. I myself think it is, but I hesitate to be doctrinaire about it because it's obvious that intelligent people can in all good faith simply disagree on this matter. Menuhin's full-blooded, emotional approach to the music (or use of the music) involves extremes of dynamics and a freedom of tempo which appal my timid soul. I was interested to note that many of Menuhin's ideas tally with the edition of the sonatas and partitas prepared by Jan Hambourg (and published by the Oxford University Press). In a copy of this edition which I have seen Hambourg added a manuscript dedication to his master Ysaye, and according to his biographer the young Menuhin made his first acquaintance with the complete set through Hambourg when he first went to Paris. Moreover, we know that Menuhin has a deep admiration for Ysaye ; he has written of him as " the last of the romantic race of mighty men who were violin virtuosi ". We seem to be in the presence of a powerful tradition stemming at least from Ysaye, and possibly with its roots still further back. But I doubt, myself, whether it really goes any further back than the nineteenth century. I don't think Bach would have understood what Menuhin was talking about when he wrote (I quote again from his preface to a biography of Ysaye) : " The task of the interpreter is to strike a balance between the work of the composer and his own conscience. He is ever trying to fill to the utmost with his own essence another man's form. In no circumstances may he distort the form, yet in order that it may re-live, it must contain the reality of his own convictions and his own emotions ". I don't for one moment doubt that Menuhin's performance of the Bach sonatas and partitas does contain the reality of his own convictions and his own emotions, and I am sure that for a great many people it will indeed bring the music fully to life in a way that Johanna Martzy's performance does not. All I can say, regretfully and with great respect, is that for me it gets in the way of the music.

After this rather metaphysical review it may seem almost irrelevant to add that H.M.V. have made an excellent job of the recording.

J.N.

BARTOK. Piano Works, Volume III : 15 Hungarian Peasant Songs ; Sonata (1926) ; Three Rondos on Hungarian Folk Songs ; Rumanian Christmas Songs ; Suite, Op. 14. **Andor Foldes** (piano). D.G.G. DGM18272 (12 in., 41s. 8½d.).

This record, containing a magnificent performance of the Bartók Sonata, and continuously enjoyable throughout, is urgently recommended on collectors. On four D.G.G.s, Andor Foldes has recorded a very extensive cross-section of Bartók's piano music ; and those who already have Vol. II (DGM18271) or Vol. IV (DGM18273) will need no further encouragement towards this new record. Let us hope that Vol. I, containing the Sonatina and selections from *For Children*, Book I, and *Mikrokosmos*, will not be long delayed.

Foldes plays Bartók's music with the utmost brilliance and refinement. In the smaller pieces we can perceive the individual qualities which together go to build so stunning a performance of the Sonata. In the first Rondo, for example, his delivery of the simple, singing melody which opens the piece is wonderfully lyrical. In the Rumanian Christmas Songs his sense of rhythm is superlative. These Christmas Songs (two sets of ten, by the way, which accounts for a band unexplained by the label) were collected between 1909 and

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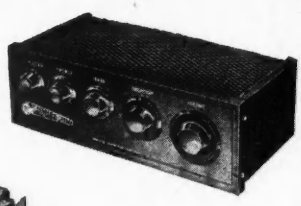

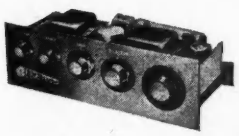

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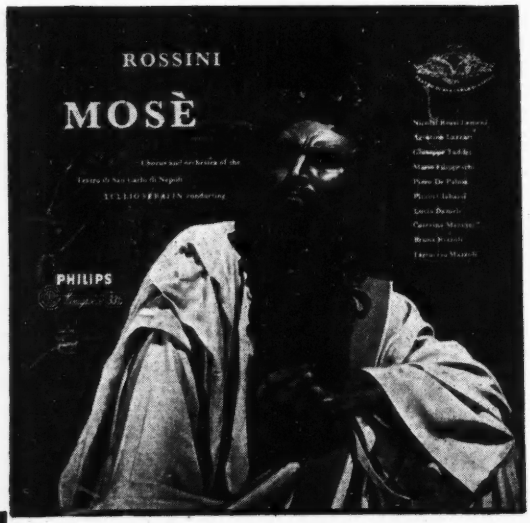

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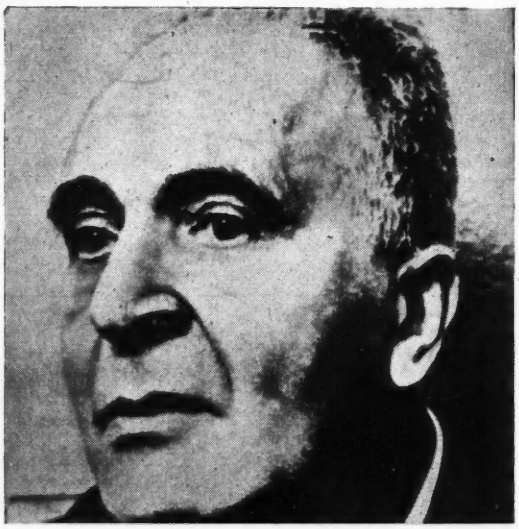

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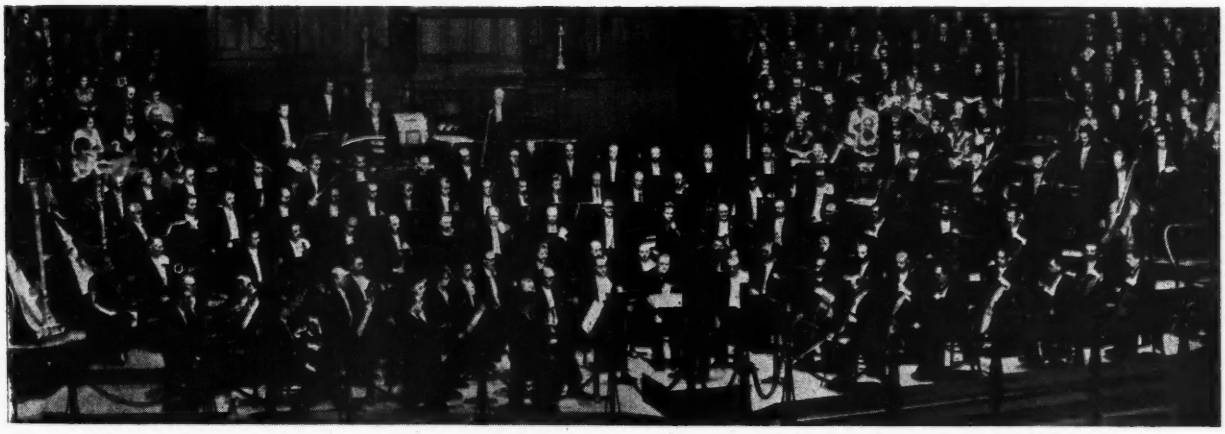

Sibelius 1865-1957

In mourning the passing of the great Finnish master, we can perhaps take comfort from the fact that the world of music paid its homage to him not only at his death but also during his lifetime. The records listed here, made by two conductors who have done so much to make the music of Sibelius internationally known and loved, are among the works of this unique composer to be found in the Philips catalogue.

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Mladi (Youth)
Suite for Woodwind Sextet (1924)
The Philadelphia Woodwind Quintet
with Leon Lester Bass Clarinet
ABR 4057

Brahms

Piano Quartet in C minor, Op. 60
Joseph Szigeti (Violin) Milton Katims (Viola)
Paul Tortelier ('cello) Dame Myra Hess (Piano)
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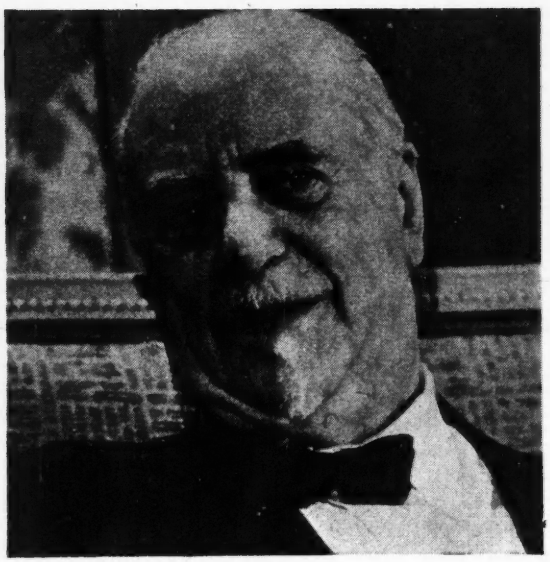

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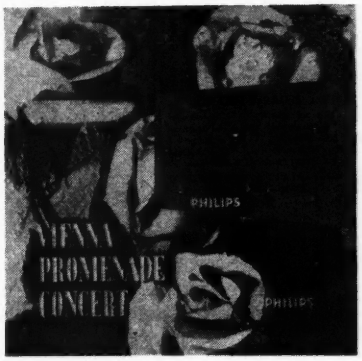

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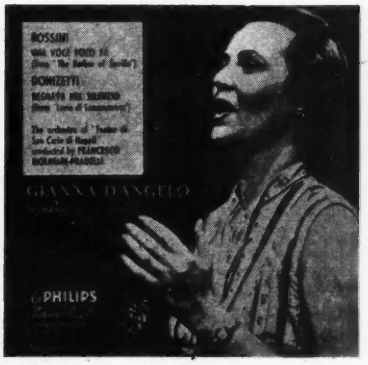

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(PGP-49)

1917; they "were sung usually by young men, sometimes by girls, who wandered from house to house during the Christmas season". In the beautiful last movement of the Suite, Foldes's grading of the tonal palette is particularly striking.

At the least, the smaller pieces on this disc are fascinating and attractive. I find many of them amazingly beautiful, and the Sonata a work of flaming genius. The recording—as of the other records in this series—is superlative. A.P.

BEETHOVEN. Piano Sonatas: No. 1 in F minor, Op. 2, No. 1; No. 8 in C minor, Op. 13, "Pathétique"; No. 19 in G minor, Op. 49, No. 1; No. 20 in G major, Op. 49, No. 2. **Walter Gieseking** (piano). Columbia 33CX1488 (12 in., 41s. 8½d.).

As A.P. remarked some months ago in these columns, Gieseking often seemed to play Beethoven in the light of his experience of Debussy. The little Op. 49 sonatas with which so many of us struggled in our youth sound very different on this record to what they did when I used to knock them about. Every note has its place carefully and coolly chosen for it, and though Gieseking cannot do much with the wretched rondo that ends the G minor, he makes the famous "tempo di minuetto" in the G major as radiantly fresh as though it was receiving its first performance. The other two sonatas call for a very different treatment, one would think, but though Gieseking tears off the first movement of the "Pathétique" at a tremendous pace, perhaps a little too fast to convey its tragic grandeur, one still senses the meticulous, almost *pointiliste* care over each individual note. One or two mildly disturbing things happen in the F minor; for instance unaccountable, almost bizarre changes of tempi in the finale, notably just before the recapitulation. And why did he do the repeat in this movement and not in the first which needs one much more? But the middle movements are delicious, while the whole of the "Pathétique" is a wonder of playing. This is not the same recording that A.R. reviewed with enthusiasm in October, 1953, but another recorded shortly before Gieseking's death.

The piano is fairly well recorded, though I found I had to add top for the best results. On my copy both movements of the little G major end in a spluther of surface noise for some reason. R.F.

BEETHOVEN. Piano Sonatas: No. 3 in C major, Op. 2, No. 3; No. 10 in G major, Op. 14, No. 2. **Wilhelm Kempff** (piano). D.G.G. DGM18079 (12 in., 41s. 8½d.).

Sonata No. 3:	
Backhaus	(1/53) LXT2747
Gulda	(8/54) LXT2938
Sonata No. 10:	
Backhaus	(11/54) LXT2931
Matthews	(8/54) 33SX1023

Both these sonatas were written in the eighteenth century, and Kempff almost plays them as though the nineteenth century had never happened. Backhaus, on the other hand, seems to let his knowledge of such works as the "Waldstein" and the "Appassionata" colour his playing of the earlier sonatas; accordingly he searches out latent *Sturm und Drang* qualities and emphasises them. Today Kempff's is the more sophisticated approach. He eschews the romantic, cultivates understatement. But one wonders which attitude Beethoven, as a young man, would have preferred. His contemporaries, I am sure, would have admired Kempff's reading of the C major with its culture and restraint. Backhaus makes the first movement sound "bigger" music, and I cannot help feeling that already in his Op. 2 Beethoven would have welcomed his more exciting performance; he was writing as "big" as he knew how. But in the slow movement Kempff's dedicated approach is beyond praise, and I liked his rather quiet reading of the scherzo (in which, for some reason, there is no second repeat).

In the G major, Backhaus is below form, and Denis Matthews is Kempff's chief rival. Here, too, Kempff is cooler, simpler and more restrained; Matthews "does more" with the music, being faster and more rubato in the first movement, slower and with a greater feeling of almost-humorous suspense in the variations. There is evidence that Beethoven himself played the first movement of this sonata with a very great deal of rubato, and it may well be an illusion that Kempff's style is the more "period". But he certainly plays these two works with great polish and sensitivity. Surfaces are silent, piano quality beautifully reproduced. R.F.

BEETHOVEN. Piano Sonatas: No. 7 in D major, Op. 10, No. 3; No. 32 in C minor, Op. 111. **Edwin Fischer** (piano). H.M.V. ALP1271 (12 in., 41s. 8½d.).

Sonata No. 7:	
Backhaus	(10/54) LXT2809
Sonata No. 32:	
Backhaus	(10/54) LXT2939
Solomon	(4/56) ALP1160
Katchen	(6/56) LXT5187
Kempff	(9/56) DGM18045
Wuehrer	(6/57) PL9900
Siki	(9/57) 33CX1185

The second and third movements of the D major Sonata are so marvellously well played as to make this a record I would not willingly forego. The opening Presto is taken just a little faster than Fischer's technique finds comfortable, so that there are some smudgy bits; and it is perhaps all a little brighter and more forceful than Beethoven's dynamic indications might suggest. But the development section is given that "creative" sense of excitement which is so often to be admired in Fischer's interpretations, and the final page of the coda is lovely. The great thing in the performance is the second movement, *largo e mesto*, played with supreme eloquence and imagination, and very thrilling in the impassioned central section. The Minuet and Trio afford a model of rhythm and phrasing, the *dolce* delivery of the Minuet theme so shapely, and the Trio with a spring and unhurried bounciness that make us feel love for the composer of such music. The Finale is played with brio and darting fancy. How strange that recording pianists should have paid so little attention to the Op. 10 sonatas.

Fischer's Op. 111 is less memorable, though it is unfailingly thoughtful and in some passages very interesting. For some reason, he does not hold us engrossed in the progression of the great arietta and variations, and occasionally his technique seems to be strained to its limits. The recording, of both sonatas, is immediate and excellent; the exposed high notes of Op. 111, often a weakness, are captured in true, undistorted tone. A.P.

BRAHMS. Hungarian Dances. Alfred Brendel (piano), **Walter Klein** (piano). Vox PL9640 (12 in., 41s. 9d.).

I put this record on my gramophone without very much enthusiasm. But my impression that Everyone Knows These Old Things was soon dispelled by the discovery that I, for one, did not. It is true in a sense that everyone knows those in the first set (Nos. 1-10) that for years have been taking punishment from orchestras and bands all over the world. But Brahms wrote them for piano duet, and until you have heard them in their original form you cannot claim to know them at all. The felicities and inventiveness of his piano writing only survive the change of medium in Dvořák's delicious orchestrations of the last five of set two (Nos. 17-21). Dvořák apart, this second set has always been much less popular than the first, and I cannot recall hearing Nos. 11-16 in any form. And what attractive music there is in this second set. This is popular music of the highest class, tuneful, piquant and most beautifully written. One would give much to have heard Brahms and Clara Schumann romping through them at the first performance.

Not that they can have played them much better than Messrs. Brendel and Klien, whose performance is of the very highest quality; their ensemble is impeccable, they have a nice judgment in matters of rubato, and there is both dexterity and humour in their fingerwork. The recording is a little marred by pre-echo, not only before pieces begin, but also occasionally at other times; for instance, during the final chords of the last dance. Otherwise the quality is satisfactory, while the music and performance are irresistible. R.F.

CHOPIN. Mazurka in C sharp minor, Op. 50, No. 3. Polonaise No. 9 in B flat major, Op. 71, No. 2. Stefan Askenase (piano). D.G.G. EPL30263 (7 in., 16s. 8½d.).

This is a small-scale performance of two small-scale, but by no means insignificant, pieces. Askenase excels in the more feline aspects of Chopin-playing, and both the mazurka and the polonaise on this disc are

nothing if not elegant. It might perhaps be felt that the rhythm of the mazurka was just a little too self-conscious and coy, but I can quite imagine Chopin playing it in this way. The polonaise, too, is taken much more as a dance than as a nationalistic manifesto, which is all to the good. The recording is good, but the very first note of the mazurka (admittedly marked *sotto voce* by Chopin) appears to have been clipped off the tape.

J.N.

CHOPIN. Etudes, Op. 25. Iso Elinson (piano). Pye CCT31003 (10 in., 30s. 11½d.).

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Cherkassky	(2/56) ALP1310-1
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Anda	(9/57) 33CX1459

I enjoyed this disc rather more than Iso Elinson's recording of the Op. 10 set (reviewed last July), but I'm afraid I don't think it's in the same class as Geza Anda's performance of Op. 25, which came out only last month. Elinson's virile, straightforward approach to the music stands him in good stead in some of these studies, but too often he lets the figuration just run on of its own accord, without shaping it properly. He deserves a good mark for the perfect judgment of tempo at the beginning of No. 11, where the solemn, pensive introduction is suddenly swept aside by passionate semiquavers, but when I compared this performance in detail with Anda's I found place after place where Elinson's reading seemed stodgy and unsubtle. His use of the sustaining pedal also seems rather excessive at times, particularly in Nos. 2, 5 and 6. The main advantage of this disc over its competitors is that it costs about ten shillings less—if it did not have to meet comparison with Anda's recording that might well decide the day.

J.N.

CHOPIN. Sonata No. 2 in B flat minor, Op. 35.
DEBUSSY. La cathédrale engloutie from Préludes, Book I. **Poissons d'or** from Images, 2nd Series. **La fille aux cheveux de lin** from Préludes, Book I. **Masques. La Terrasse des audiences au clair de lune** from Préludes, Book II. **Ondine** from Préludes, Book II. **Artur Rubinstein** (piano). H.M.V. APL1477 (12 in., 41s. 8½d.).

This record has been available in America for some years, and I fancy that " La fille aux cheveux de lin " and " Masques " are not new to us either, for a small disc containing these and other pieces played by Rubinstein was reviewed in these columns in 1955. Rubinstein seems to me to be especially good at Debussy. He sometimes ignores dynamic markings, most noticeably in " Ondine ", changing *pianos* and *pianissimos* into *fortes* and yet somehow preserving the poetry of the music. I particularly liked his " Poissons d'or ". He is less atmospheric than Gieseking, but plays with an engaging air of improvisation. At times I was aware of a hum on the record, unusual for being in the middle of the register ; to be precise, the G flat below middle C. In " La fille aux cheveux de lin " it was rather effective, G flat being the key of this piece.

Rubinstein's performance of Chopin's " Funeral March " sonata is fascinating and wayward. In the scherzo his playing is at times untidy, but even at its untidiest it is compellingly interesting. I am not sure that I like his heavy left hand chords in the Funeral March, and his insertion of a D natural in the final chord is positively bizarre, while his many variations in volume in the tiny presto finale are uncanonic and not in my view to be imitated. On the other hand the first movement comes off splendidly.

The piano quality is not quite as full and rounded as one can hope for these days.

R.F.

DEBUSSY. Suite Bergamasque. Children's Corner. Estampes. Rudolf Firkusny (piano). Capitol P8350 (12 in., 41s. 8½d.).

Gieseking has cornered the market in Debussy recordings. Firkusny, a versatile and often subtle pianist, plays the *Estampes* very attractively, with an excellent grasp of their diverse rhythms and motions, using a subdued, delicate but not dull palette. But his readings are not fired by the genius that informs Gieseking's performance (on Columbia 33CX1137), which is compound of beauties in pedalling, touch, and inflection, and sounds far more evocative. Firkusny's *Children's Corner Suite* is slightly lacking in imaginative flair (lasting only 15½ minutes, it takes one whole side, which is pretty poor value for a 12-inch LP). Gieseking's superlative account of the *Suite Bergamasque*, issued on 78s and then withdrawn, still awaits microgroove publication. Impatient people, who already have the *Children's Corner* and *Estampes*, will probably be tempted by the Decca MP, LW5278, on which Friedrich Gulda plays the Suite in a shapely way. Firkusny, like Gulda, makes the elements of claveciniste pastiche the starting-point of his interpretation, but he comes nearer than the Austrian pianist to finding the sudden romantic flecks and gleams which Gieseking realised so perfectly. He plays *Clair de lune* very well. Admirable recording.

A.P.

FRANCK. Trois Pièces pour grand orgue: No. 3—Pièce héroique. **Six Pièces pour grand orgue:** No. 3—Prélude, fugue et variation, Op. 18 ; No. 4—Pastorale, Op. 19 ; No. 6—Final, Op. 21. **Richard Ellsasser** (organ). Parlophone PMC1037 (12 in., 41s. 8½d.). Recorded at the John Hays Hammond Museum, Gloucester, Mass.

All these four organ pieces have something to offer the non-organist. The " Pièce héroique " is mercifully much less héroique than one would expect and has considerable individuality ; the unassuming *Pastorale* can be forgiven its rather weak middle section for the sake of what comes before and after, while the *Final*, after a long and rather dreary opening for pedal solo, blossoms into genuine grandeur. But as music the *Prélude, fugue et variation* is much the most attractive item on this disc. This is Franck at his best. Unfortunately it is the least well played. The organist keeps breaking the gentle flow of the music with rallentandos that the composer did not ask for, notable at all recapitulations of the main tune ; and I do not mean those slight easings of the tempo which most players would accept at such moments, but great slowings-up that leave the listener fidgeting. Much of the time the playing is good, and the organ sounds splendid, and in the other pieces I would only fault Mr. Ellsasser for the coda of the *Final*, which, with tempi all over the place and the main tune inaudible, seemed to me a total loss.

Two peculiarities in the recording need a mention. In loud held chords the sound throbbed on my apparatus instead of going through steadily ; I cannot imagine what would cause this. Secondly, in the *Pastorale*, something very curious happens between the first and second sections. The piece is in E major, and this first section ends on what should be a tonic chord, but as the piece has been recorded slightly sharp it is in fact a chord of F major. This would not matter so very much had it not been for the fact that the second section is at the proper pitch. Thus the E with which it opens is a semitone below the E major chord that precedes it.

R.F.

FRESCOBALDI. Toccata prima Partite 11 sopra l'Aria di Monicha. Corrente 1-4. Canzona terza. Canzona quarta. Gagliarde quarta e quinta. Aria detta la Frescobalda. Fritz Neumeyer (harpsichord). D.G.G. Archive AP13043 (10 in., 30s. 11d.).

This most recent issue of Frescobaldiana consists of snippets, after the manner of the Vox and Telefunken discs, taken from various publications of this great Italian master, who still remains an unknown quantity to the majority of listeners and will remain so until it is realised by recording companies that he is not a miniaturist. We must be thankful, none the less, for D.G.G.'s reasonably intelligent selection of pieces, and for Neumeyer's excellent playing, which suggests that he has taken the trouble to read the German translation of Frescobaldi's original Italian preface to the *Toccate* of 1637 in the edition of Pierre Pidoux.

Frescobaldi was understandably anxious lest his toccatas should be played in a dull, mechanical fashion by musicians with little or no feeling for style. So he explained in the preface to his first edition of the *Toccate e Partite d'Intavolatura di Cimbalo* (1615) exactly how this problem should be tackled. When the volume was reprinted later in the same year, the composer added a few more details, being clearly convinced that only repeated and careful explanation would achieve the end he sought after. Neumeyer, in his performance of the first toccata from the above-mentioned volume, makes the necessary adjustments of tempo throughout the piece, and there is no doubt whatever that the result is extremely effective and musically convincing. But as this is the only toccata he plays, it is more than a little

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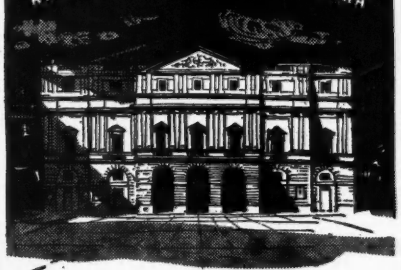

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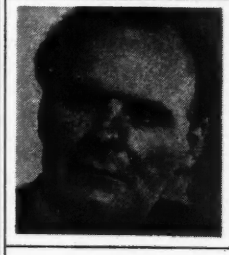

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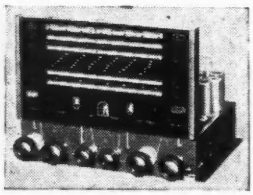

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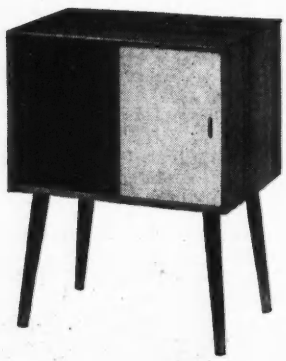

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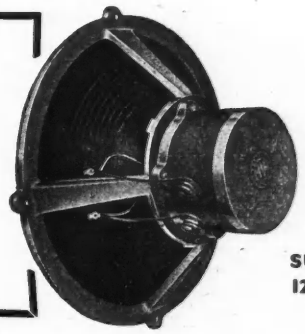

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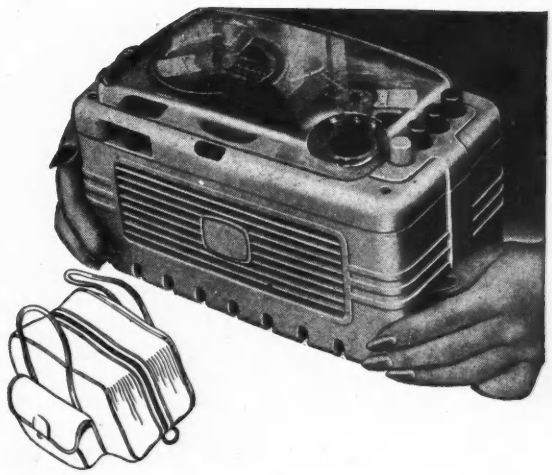

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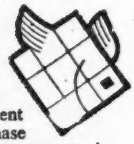

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odd that the disc should be entitled "Toccate d'intavolatura and other works". The explanation is simply this: Frescobaldi's 1615 book was republished at least five times before 1637, which is the date of the last known reprint. Each successive edition included a few more pieces (the *Corrente*, for instance, did not appear until the second edition) and it is the 1637 edition that has been used as a basis for Pidoux's Bärenreiter volume. By the time the fifth edition appeared in 1637 the title had been modified and extended to *Toccate d'intavolatura di Cimbalo et Organo, Partite di diverse Arie e Corrente, Balletti, Ciaccone, Passachagli*. D.G.G. have used the first three words of this title rather misleadingly, since the reverse of the disc includes works from the second book of Toccatas, published in 1627 and again in 1637 (the same year as the final reprint of the first book). No index card was included with my disc, but listeners and librarians may like to know that side A is taken from the first book, and side B from the second.

Neumeyer uses registration sensibly and adopts good tempi for the majority of the pieces. But he does odd things with the four *Corrente* at the ends of sections. Frescobaldi, like countless of his contemporaries, expected an ending on the second beat of a three-beat bar to pick up immediately with the third beat of the opening bar: a repeat without a gap, notwithstanding the rests placed before the third beat. What Neumeyer does is to add another bar to the structure by repeating the final cadence chord; but this transforms Frescobaldi's already baroque 10-bar section into an odd length of 11 bars (*Corrente prima*), and similarly a 12-bar section into 13 (*Corrente seconda*). It is a different matter when he adds an extra chord at the very end of a piece, for this is perfectly allowable and in keeping with baroque practice.

The two *Canzone* are well played, and they have been aptly chosen as representative examples of Frescobaldi's art. The second of these pieces is to be found in the "Historical Anthology of Music" by Davison and Apel, volume 2, as well as in the complete edition of Pierre Pidoux. Most attractive musically are the two short *Gagliarde*, with their subtle and lively cross-rhythms, and their jaunty airs. The recording of the harpsichord has been carried out successfully. D.S.

HAYDN. Piano Sonata No. 22 in B flat. Fritz Neumeyer (clavichord). D.G.G. Archive EPA37148 (7 in., 16s. 8½d.).

I am sure Haydn must sometimes have played his sonatas on the clavichord, and it's a good idea of D.G.G.'s to let us hear how they go on that instrument. On the other hand I'm not so certain that it was a good idea to choose this particular sonata for the experiment. The slow movement is very chromatic and "affective", but rather in the Italian manner than the German—in fact it is reminiscent of the slow movement of Bach's Italian Concerto; and we know that the clavichord was never particularly popular south of the Alps. I would have preferred to hear this sonata on the harpsichord, and it rather sounds as if Fritz Neumeyer would have preferred to play it on a harpsichord too, since he really doesn't take full advantage of the expressive possibilities of the clavichord. The whole thing is a bit on the stodgy side, with a distinctly slow first movement; Neumeyer plays all repeats, which means that both halves of this movement are heard twice! But this is one of the earliest of Haydn's extant sonatas. I see that van Hoboken's new catalogue of Haydn's works assigns it tentatively to a date before 1760; certainly Haydn had forgotten all about it when he came to draw up his own catalogue of his compositions, and in fact it was not printed at all until it came out in the complete edition in 1918. It is really rather an insignificant item in the list of Haydn's keyboard sonatas, and while so many finer ones remain unrecorded I can't help wishing that Archive (or any other company for that matter) would turn their attention to them. J.N.

SHURA CHERKASSKY. Hungarian Rhapsody No. 13 in A minor (Liszt). **Bagatelle in G minor, Op. 119, No. 1** (Beethoven). **Valse de l'opéra Faust** (Gounod-Liszt). **Le Cygne** from "Le Carnaval des Animaux (Saint-Saëns, arr. Godowsky). **Musical Box, Op. 32** (Liadov). **Three Chinese Pictures** (Chasins): Shanghai tragedy, Op. 7; Flirtation in a Chinese Garden, Op. 5; Rush-hour in Hong Kong. **Toccata** from "Three Pieces for Piano" (Poulenc). **Circus Polka** (Stravinsky). **Shura Cherkassky** (piano). H.M.V. ALP1527 (12 in., 41s. 8½d.).

What a very mixed bag this is! I can't help wishing that it had been split up into a number of extended-play discs, for I simply can't believe that all these items will appeal equally to any one individual. For my money the Liszt *Hungarian Rhapsody* is the pick of the bunch—a performance of the greatest virtuosity and elegance. The Beethoven *Bagatelle*, on the other hand, is possibly a little too elegant; I don't think Cherkassky quite catches the rough humour of the piece as Schnabel, for instance, used to. Liszt's arrangement of the *Faust* waltz is again superbly played, but musically it's really rather lightweight for the longest piece on the disc. Some time I hope that Cherkassky will devote a whole disc to Liszt's arrangements of other men's music—some of the Schubert song arrangements are magnificent—and if he does then this piece might form quite an appropriate ending to it; in this context, however, I feel it could be dispensed with. So, too, could the arrangement of Saint-Saëns' hard-worked *Swan*—but no, perhaps not; Godowsky's chromatic additions to it are among the most comic things I have ever heard. It would be hard to have to do without them.

The music on the second side is all pretty insubstantial—little more than a collection of encores, in fact. Cherkassky plays it all extremely well, but it would take more than that to reconcile me to the teashop exoticism of the Chasins pieces, or even to the piano version of Stravinsky's *Circus Polka*, which must surely be the worst piece he has ever written. The Liadov *Musical Box* and the Poulenc *Toccata* are on a rather higher level, but are barely sufficient to redeem a whole LP side. Let's hope that Cherkassky's next recorded recital will have a little more shape to it. J.N.

MILSTEIN MINIATURES. From my Homeland—No. 2 (Smetana). **Mélodie** (Gluck-Kreisler). **Mazurka in D major, Op. 19, No. 2** (Wieniawski). **Siciliano** (Vivaldi). **It rains in the village** (Kodály-Milstein). **Nocturne in C sharp minor** (Chopin-Milstein). **Perpetuum mobile** (F. Ries). **Larghetto** (Nardini). **Hungarian Dance No. 2 in D minor** (Brahms-Joachim). **Méditation** from "Thaïs" (Massenet). **Russian Maiden's Song** (Stravinsky-Dushkin). **Sicilienne** (Paradis-Dushkin). **Flight of the Bumble Bee** (Rimsky-Korsakov). **Nathan Milstein** (violin), **Leon Pommers** (piano). Capitol P8339 (12 in., 41s. 8½d.).

Of its kind, the record is very well done. The classical numbers are played cleanly and purely. The virtuosic ones are properly so. The Smetana and Kodály (a song transcription) are both evocative works so attractive as to make one wish they were obtainable in another context. Personally I like more sentiment in the *Thaïs* Méditation: Milstein's tone is forceful rather than tender, as if he were not really thinking about Thaïs at all; and the Dance of the Blessed Spirits, with the flute solo transferred to fiddle, is surely taken far too quickly for the heavenly melody to yield its grace and beauty. The recording, both of violin and piano, is excellent, and well balanced. A.P.

CHORAL AND SONG

BRAHMS. Lieder Recital: Wie Melodien zieht es Mir, Op. 105, No. 1 (Groth); Sonntag, Op. 47, No. 3 (Uhland); Minnelied, Op. 71, No. 5 (Hölty); Komm bald, Op. 97, No. 5 (Groth); Wir wandelten, Op. 96, No. 2 (Daumer); Wie bist du, meine Königin, Op. 32, No. 9 (Daumer); Sapphische Ode, Op. 94, No. 4 (Schmidt); Botschaft, Op. 47, No. 1 (Daumer); Sommerabend, Op. 85, No. 1 (Heine); Mondenschein, Op. 85, No. 2 (Heine); Ständchen, Op. 106, No. 1 (Kugler); Heimweh 2—"O wüsst' ich doch den Weg zurück", Op. 63, No. 8 (Groth); Auf dem Kirchhofe, Op. 105, No. 4 (von Liliencron); Heimkehr, Op. 7, No. 6 (Uhland); In Waldeseinsamkeit, Op. 85, No. 6 (Lemcke); Wenn du nur zuweilen lächelst, Op. 57, No. 2 (Daumer); Verrat, Op. 105, No. 5 (Lemcke). **Hans Hotter** (baritone), **Gerald Moore** (piano). Columbia 33CX1448 (12 in., 41s. 8½d.).

Everyone who heard it, in the opera house or on the air, must have felt that Hans Hotter's performance as Wotan, in *The Valkyrie*, during the first cycle of *The Ring*, was one of the finest they had ever

experienced. I do not remember ever being so moved before by "Wotan's Farewell".

In this recital Hotter scales his great voice down to a very intimate level. The low-keys into which many of the songs are transposed and the similarity of their emotional feeling do a little make for monotony on the first side of the disc, tenderly and beautifully though all the songs are sung. The tone is perhaps a little hollow in *Wie bist du, meine Königin*. In the touching song of recollected youth, *O wüsst' ich doch den Weg zurück* and in *Sapphische Ode* the singer excels and how good it is to hear this last song, sung by a man, instead of, as so often, by a booming contralto. The more dramatic songs come on the second side. There are splendid outbursts in the second of the two Heine songs, *Mondenschein*, and in the early song *Heimkehr*, and a fine climax in *Auf dem Kirchhofe*, that graphic picture of a wind-swept churchyard awakening in the beholder the contrasted emotions of repulsion and hope, much as in the *Requiem*.

In Waldeseinsamkeit is the compliment of *Feldeinsamkeit*, the beauty of a summer evening in the one, of noontide in the other. It is good to have this lovely song and so many others on this side put now onto LP.

The balance is excellent. All in all a most enjoyable disc. A.R.

BRAHMS. Six Lieder: Sommerabend; Mondenschein; Es liebt sich so lieblich; Meerfahrt; Es schauen die Blumen; Der Tod, das ist die kühle Nacht (Heine).

SCHUMANN. Dichterliebe, Op. 48. Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau (baritone). **Joerg Demus** (piano). D.G.G. DGM18370 (12 in., 41s. 8½d.).

Dichterliebe:

Souzay, Bonneau	(3/54) LXT2875
Ludwig, Raucheisen	(2/55) DG16029
Schiotz, Moore	(4/55) BLP1064
A. & H. Dermota	(4/55) LGX66023
Lehmann, Walter	(12/53) (11/57) ABL3166

There are exceptions to every rule but, in general, it is surely not wise for a solo pianist to turn accompanist. It is a different matter in the case of duet-sonatas, and chamber music generally, but where a singer is concerned the solo pianist is apt to become too reticent, and one cannot expect him to have the knowledge of the many ways in which the accompanist has to distribute weight of tone, be constantly wary—almost an additional sense in the true accompanist—and generally to possess all the virtues expounded in Gerald Moore's admirable book *Singer and Accompanist*. I admire Joerg Demus as a pianist, he knows his Schumann well, and some of his playing—in spite of shallow piano tone—is all it should be: but I still feel he is miscast and the performance suffers accordingly. To give two examples: "Im wunderschönen Monat Mai" is over-pedalled and "Das ist ein Flöten und Geigen" lacks crispness. One has only to turn to the Schiötz-Moore recording to see the difference.

Fischer-Dieskau is a superb interpreter of the cycle and is here at his finest except in "Die Rose, die Lilie" which, sung at a spanking pace, is too much of a virtuoso performance. Compare this with Lotte Lehmann's singing and the little touch she gives to the first word of "Taube und Sonne"—a moment of tenderness—and the difference will be apparent.

It is good to hear the cadence phrases of "Im wunderschönen Monat Mai" sung without strain. There are so many lovely points of interpretation elsewhere one would like to point out, the whispered "ich liebe dich" in "Wenn ich in deinen Augen seh", the beautifully calculated ritardandos (with art concealing art), the variety of tone and colour, the splendid emotional climax in "Ich grolle nicht", the deep feeling put into the last word of "Ich hab' im Traum' geweinet". This is a cycle of continuous music and though one welcomes grooves in order to be able to pick out one song, the occasional "plop" as the needle travels over the groove (or scroll, if you like) is sometimes a bit disturbing. I have drawn attention elsewhere to the excellence of the Schiötz-Moore interpretation. The piano, as such, sounds best in the Ludwig and Raucheisen recording, but I care less for his singing than I thought I did. Lotte Lehmann and Fischer-Dieskau, in their different ways, share the honours in the matter of interpretation. Gerald Moore carries off the prize for the perfect accompaniment. A.R.

BRITTEN. A Charm of Lullabies, Op. 41.

PURCELL. Music for a While: From Rosy Bowers. Pamela Bowden (contralto), **Peter Gellhorn** (piano). Decca LW5300 (10 in., 20s. 10d.).

Miss Bowden's recording début could be welcomed unreservedly if it were not for something over which she presumably had no control: the microphone has been so placed as to suggest that we are listening from the next room to a performance given in an empty garage. It's just possible that this was done to avoid trouble with breathing or with sibilants, I suppose, but that would not explain why the piano should be so distant and foggy. I suspect that the basic trouble was the use of an unsuitable studio. But in any case no one should let this technical deficiency blind him to the very considerable merits of the record. Miss Bowden has a beautiful voice, even though it may not yet be quite mature (it lacks richness below B, and tends to get a little unsteady on pianissimo held notes), and very considerable maturity of style. This can be seen both in the varied lullabies which make up Britten's group of songs and also in Altisidora's song, "From rosy bowers". This was written for the third part of D'Urfey's *Comical History of Don Quixote* when Purcell was already sick with the illness that was to kill him at the age of thirty-six; it was in fact advertised as "the last Piece set to Musick by the late Famous Mr. Henry Purcell". Altisidora and her friends plot to make Don Quixote unfaithful to Dulcinea. "I intend", she says, "to tease him now with a whimsical variety, as if I were possess'd of several degrees of passion"—and in this song Purcell, the greatest English master of emotional expression, takes up the challenge of finding the correct musical equivalent to each of the "several degrees of passion" involved. The whole scena is a set-piece that needs just a hint of the tongue in the cheek, and I think (though I'm not quite sure) that Miss Bowden realises this. The other Purcell song is, of course, well known from Alfred Deller's recording, and I suspect that admirers of his art may find Miss Bowden a little plummy for their taste; nevertheless it's a good piece of singing, even though the song was in fact intended for a male voice. The realisation used for this is by Michael Tippett (as in Deller's record); for Altisidora's song it is substantially that of the Purcell Society's edition.

Britten's songs were written in 1947 for Nancy Evans, and it might be thought that they need rather more mezzo than contralto tone. But Miss Bowden sings them with no apparent strain, and her characterisation of each one is so successful that I hope she may eventually join with Peter Pears and Benjamin Britten in giving us a recording (which we sadly need) of the canticle *Abraham and Isaac*. Her voice is not yet as opulent as Kathleen Ferrier's, but her dramatic sense is possibly more developed. J.N.

DELIUS. Idyll: I once passed through a populous city. Sylvia Fisher (soprano), **Jess Walters** (baritone). **Irmelin:** Prelude. **On hearing the first cuckoo in spring. Fennimore and Gerda:** Intermezzo. **Village Romeo and Juliet:** Walk to the Paradise Garden. **Hallé Orchestra** conducted by **Sir John Barbirolli.** Pye CCL30108 (12 in., 39s. 11½d.).

Delius enthusiasts will naturally be attracted by this, the first recording of the *Idyll*, a work which is scarcely ever heard, and even a score of which is very hard to come by. It was written in 1930, with the help of Delius's invaluable amanuensis, Eric Fenby, as a revised form of his early unperformed opera, *Margot-la-Rouge*, to which were now fitted words from Walt Whitman. There are moments of intense lyrical beauty, but taken as a whole it must be admitted that the work is too long and scrappy to be successful, and Delius's lack of feeling for the rhythms of English prosody makes the word-setting distinctly artificial. The performance is a sincere and heartfelt one, but intending purchasers should be warned that the baritone's voice is so unfocused that at moments it is literally impossible to say with exactitude what notes are intended. The recording is excellent.

From among the four favourite orchestral pieces on the other side, however, only the *Walk to the Paradise Garden* is satisfactorily recorded: the others all suffer from buzzy woodwind and edgy string tone, with numerous odd grunts and groans sounds intruding at times (e.g. in the final cadence of *First Cuckoo*, and in the *Intermezzo*). Even in the *Walk* the solo clarinet is made to sound fuzzy. As to the interpretation, one's impression is of the orchestra made to

squeeze out the last drop of emotion from the music (all those string portamentos!); the delicate, wistful mood that Beecham conjured up so wonderfully is thickened and smothered, the sweetness allowed to become cloying. L.S.

SCHUMANN. Frauenliebe und Leben, Op. 42. Dichterliebe, Op. 48. Lotte Lehmann (soprano), **Bruno Walter** (piano). Philips ABL3166 (12 in., 41s. 9d.).

Frauenliebe und Leben:
Ferrier, Newmark (2/51) LXT2556 or (4/54) LW5089
Flagstad, McArthur (11/54) ALP1191

Dichterliebe:
Souzay, Bonneau (3/54) LXT2875
Ludwig, Raucheisen (2/55) DG16029
Schioltz, Moore (4/55) BLP1064
A. & H. Dermota (4/55) LGX66023

I gave Lotte Lehmann—currently enchanting and enlightening all those lucky enough to be able to attend her Master Classes at London's Wigmore Hall—enthusiastic praise for her recording of *Dichterliebe*, with Bruno Walter, when it was first issued, by Columbia, in December, 1953, and greatly enjoyed hearing it again. Playing over the other recordings it seems to be, as I said at the time, that the Schiötz-Moore one was by far the best, and that recording sounds better on my present equipment than before.

Mme Lehmann is in even better voice in her performance of *Frauenliebe und Leben* than in *Dichterliebe*: but though her singing reproduces admirably the piano accompaniment is far less well recorded than in the other cycle and almost entirely lacks any sustaining bass, nor are the two artists always in accord.

Mme Lehmann takes the first song, marked *larghetto*, slower than is usual, ignores the changes of speed indicated in the baby-cuddling song "An meinem Herzen, an meiner Brust" (fast—still faster) and rushes excitably through "Helft mir, ihr Schwestern", marked "fairly fast". The ardour and warmth of her interpretation—here indeed is a woman in love—make it easy to overlook such things. Her exquisite enunciation, the smooth negotiation of the turns in "Er, der herrlichste von allen" and the lovely open tone at "deine Wahl", in the way she sings "verklärt mich" each time in "Du Ring an meinem Finger", the tender "das Herne mein" at the end of the song, perhaps above all the inner rapture of "Süsser Freund", with its whispered envoi "Dein Bildniss," the darkened tone in the tragic last song "Nun hast du mir den ersten Schmerz getan". All these things and all the rest left unmentioned, make this, to my mind, the perfect vocal performance of the cycle.

Bruno Walter plays the poignant postlude very well, but one can only regret both his reticence and the poor reproduction of the piano tone though not even these can seriously mar the beauty of Lotte Lehmann's glorious singing. A.R.

"THE GRAMOPHONE" CLASSICAL LP CATALOGUE SEPTEMBER 1957. 3s. 6d.

BRYCHAN POWELL. The Holy City (Adams, arr. Warren). **The Lord's Prayer** (Malotte, arr. Geehl). **Jesu, Joy of Man's desiring** from Church Cantata No. 147 (Bach, arr. Whittaker). **The Lost Chord** (Sullivan). **Panis Angelicus** (Franck, arr. Geehl). **Ave Maria** (Gounod, arr. Geehl). **Ave Verum** (Mozart). **Bless this House** (Brahe, arr. Warren). **Ombra mai fu** from "Sèrse" (Handel). **Agnus Dei** (Bizet, arr. Geehl). **Brychan Powell** (tenor), **London Welsh Association Youth Choir** conducted by **Kenneth Thomas. Cyril Anthony** (organ). Delysé ECB3141 (12 in., 39s. 7½d.). Recorded in St. Peter's Church, Eaton Square, London.

This record will, I am sure, be welcomed in countless homes. Whether the same homes also welcome this Journal I cannot say. This is music for the unsophisticated, and I will only add that Brychan Powell sings his solos with fine conviction, that the choir (despite one or two moments of shaky intonation) puts up a most creditable performance, that the organ accompaniments are rather subdued, and that *Bless this House* appears to be yet another variant of *Baa, baa, Blacksheep*. Perhaps the *Ave Maria* might have been re-recorded to get rid of a rather shaky entry in the middle, but generally speaking this is an efficient disc of a type of music largely ignored by recording companies but nevertheless capable of giving a great deal of pleasure. R.F.

VAUGHAN WILLIAMS. Serenade to Music (Shakespeare). **Elsie Morison** (soprano), **Marjorie Thomas** (contralto), **Duncan Robertson** (tenor), **Trevor Anthony** (bass) and chorus. **Fantasia on "Greensleeves". Toward the Unknown Region** (Whitman), with chorus. **Overture "The Wasps".** All with the **London Symphony Orchestra** conducted by **Sir Malcolm Sargent.** H.M.V. ALP1499 (12 in., 41s. 8½d.).

This record arrives just in time for Vaughan Williams's 85th birthday, and a very delightful one it is. It is surprising to find that the *Serenade to Music* has not been recorded on an LP before; it seems to me one of V.W.'s most endearing works. He wrote it for Sir Henry Wood's Jubilee just before the war, when it was sung by sixteen distinguished soloists, but it can equally well be sung by four soloists and a small chorus as on this record. The words are from the magical conversation of Lorenzo and Jessica as they sit in the moonlight at Belmont waiting for Portia and the others to return from Venice. "How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank", and the music catches the exquisite mood of the poetry with unbelievable success.

But the performance on this record does not quite catch the exquisite mood of the music. The soloists manage pretty well, Marjorie Thomas and Duncan Robertson very well indeed (Elsie Morison misses the radiance of her last soaring phrase), but the orchestral playing is not sufficiently poetic. The orchestra seems more at home in the *Wasps* overture, which receives an enjoyably vigorous performance. Perhaps more interesting because less well-known is the first recording of an early choral piece, *Towards the Unknown Region*. There seems little room in concert life these days for the short choral work, and public performances of this one are rare. Yet it contains some very beautiful music, in the style of the "Sea" symphony with which it is roughly contemporary; and as in the "Sea" symphony, the words are by Walt Whitman. The unnamed choir sings manfully, but sounds a little lacking in numbers; the tenors especially seem understaffed. Nevertheless the effect is most enjoyable. This record, with its pleasant mixture of the known and unknown, should give a great deal of pleasure to others as it did to me. R.F.

SCHWARZKOPF. More Songs You Love: Stille Nacht (Gruber); O come all ye faithful (Oakley-Trad. Sung in English); O du fröhliche (Trad.); Sandmännchen (Trad. arr. Brahms); In einem kühlen Grunde (Eichendorff-Glück); Panis angelicus (Franck. Sung in Latin); The first Nowell (Trad. Sung in English); In dulci jubilo (Trad. Sung in Latin and English); Weihnachten (Humperdinck-Humperdinck); Vom Himmel hoch (Trad.); I saw three ships (Trad. Sung in English); Maria auf dem Berge (Trad.); Easter Alleluia (Trad. Sung in English). **Elisabeth Schwarzkopf** (soprano) with chorus, orchestra and organ, conducted by **Charles Mackerras.** All items orchestrated by Mackerras, except "Stille Nacht", and sung in German unless otherwise stated. Columbia 33CX1482 (12 in., 41s. 8½d.).

Who disdains Ernestine Schumann-Heink and the Mustel Organ in *Stille Nacht* and *Weihnachten?* Who does not feel a little thrill of pleasure when John MacCormack, singing *Panis Angelicus*, utters so memorably the words "O res mirabilis"? Nowadays our *religioso* offerings are glossed up in jumbo-sized packs. This one is—for obvious reasons—chiefly concerned with Christmas, though Brahms's Sandman and *In einem kühlen Grunde* have strayed in somehow. No expense has been spared, and Mr. Mackerras, the skilled orchestrator we know from *Pineapple Poll* and *The Lady and the Fool*, has ranged between the simplicity of a strummed guitar (for *In einem kühlen Grunde* and *Maria auf dem Berge*) to massive brass fanfares pounding through the organ and choirs of *In dulci jubilo*. *Stille Nacht* is delivered in dulcet tones through a trickling harp accompaniment, while a second voice (Mme Schwarzkopf again?) is heard gently underlying the melody in thirds. Papageno tinkles an accompaniment to *Sandmännchen*. *Panis Angelicus* is passed through the echo chamber to give a nice cathedrally feel to it. You can guess the sort of thing this record is. I hope it makes a nice lot of friends for Mme Schwarzkopf and Mr. Mackerras and Columbia. A.P.

OPERATIC

CORNELIUS. The Barber of Baghdad.
Abul Hassan **Oskar Czerwenka** (bass)
Margiana **Elisabeth Schwarzkopf** (sop.)
Nureddin **Nicolai Gedda** (ten.)
Kalif **Hermann Prey** (bar.)
Kadi **Gerhard Unger** (ten.)
Bostana **Grace Hoffman** (cont.)
Muezzin 1 **Eberhard Wächter** (bar.)
Muezzin 2 **August Jaresch** (ten.)
Muezzin 3 **Rudolf Christ** (ten.)
Philharmonia Orchestra and chorus conducted by **Erich Leinsdorf.** Chorus Master: Walter Jellinek. Columbia 33CX1400-1 (two 12 in., 83s. 5d.).

Nicely in time for the centenary next year of the opera's first performance, this release of *The Barber of Baghdad* is hereby acclaimed without hesitation as my Recording of the Year. Nearly always in a complete operatic issue, even the best, there will be small weaknesses of performance and recording: how can it be otherwise in so long and complex an undertaking? Yet here there is scarcely a flaw, and the whole issue sparkles in a way which must immediately captivate any listener.

The work itself, despite a certain slowness in dramatic construction at first, is a near-masterpiece, whose neglect is deplorable. The libretto, written by Cornelius himself, is brilliantly witty (the famous entry of the barber in Act 1 beats W. S. Gilbert at his own game) and has a true poet's delight in words. The music bubbles over with vitality. Cornelius was admittedly not a great melodist, but his rhythmic flexibility, his great harmonic freedom (it should be remembered that he was a devoted follower of Liszt and Wagner and an admirer of Berlioz), and above all his sparkling orchestral writing (which has been well likened to that in *Falstaff*), make this an astonishing work to have appeared only five years after *Trovatore* or the year before *Faust*. It is not surprising that it failed and was taken off after one performance: besides running foul of the anti-Liszt and anti - New - German - School factions in Weimar, it was so much ahead of its time. After the composer's death a fresh attempt was made to mount it, but the heavy-handed "improvements" of Mottl and Levi effectively sank it again; and it was not until 1904, when the original score was restored, that the public began to appreciate its worth. Since then it has remained in the repertoire in Germany, though the extremely subtle relationship of the music to the words (in which the influence of Nicolai's *Merry Wives of Windsor*, nine years previously, can be observed) has hindered its easy export. Anyone claiming to find an understanding of the general drift of the meaning sufficient—a regrettably common attitude—must be content to miss half the fun.

There is no mistaking the enjoyment which the present cast find in the work—an enjoyment seemingly shared by the orchestra and the chorus (*can* such convincing German come from English singers?). Outstanding in the company is Oskar Czerwenka, who very obviously relishes the verbal humour in his part, and gives a splendid comic performance, full of character, as the insufferably interfering, loquacious barber. Nicolai Gedda as the "juvenile lead" is on his best form, and Schwarzkopf brings distinction to the smallish part of his inamorata. A singer of whom, on this showing, we have heard far too little on records is Grace Hoffman (she was in the *Ariadne* recording), who has a fine voice which, unlike that of many contraltos, has an easy flexibility too: her famous duet with Gedda in Act 1 (a brilliant piece of canonic writing) is one of the highlights of the work. Incidentally, what a relief it is to hear for once a duet in octaves (Schwarzkopf and Gedda) which gives not a moment's qualm about intonation or wobble! The only slight reservation about this cast concerns the part of the Kadi, for which the singer here has rather too light a tone.

The recording has clarity, well judged balance (save for an inexplicably low vocal level for the opening number) and good perspective—the difficult and poetic scene of the three muezzins (always a problem in the theatre) comes off well. Being thoroughly critical, there are two mistakes in the tape editing (which would probably pass unnoticed if one did not have the score): in bar 53 of the Overture there is an unwanted gap, and 26 bars after the *Er kommt!* trio in Act 2 insufficient time has been left between two tapes for the syncopation. But otherwise this is a brilliant issue. I hope that Columbia is making a libretto available.

L.S.

DEBUSSY. Pelléas et Mélisande.
Pelléas **Jacques Jansen** (bar.)
Golaud **Gérard Souzay** (bar.)
Arkël **Pierre Froumenty** (bass)
Le Petit Yniold **Françoise Ogeas** (sop.)
Un Médecin **Jean Vieuille** (bar.)
Mélisande **Victoria de los Angeles** (sop.)
Geneviève **Jeannine Collard** (contr.)
Choeurs Raymond St. Paul, Orchestre National de la Radiodiffusion Française conducted by **André Cluytens.** H.M.V. ALP1522-4 (three 12 in., 125s. 1½d.).
Ansermet (9/52) LXT2711-4
Fournet (2/56) ABL3076-8

We have already had from Decca a recording of *Pelléas et Mélisande* which L.S. said in his review he could not imagine being surpassed: and, it must be said at once, it has not been surpassed in this new issue. Ansermet, to a far greater measure than either Fournet or Cluytens, brings to life the many beauties of the miraculous score, adopts exactly the right tempi—as it seems to me—gets the best balance between voices and orchestra, and gives one the feeling of seeing the great work, not as a succession of scenes, but as a whole. The cumulative power of his interpretation makes Arkël's cry in the last Act, "Mais la tristesse Golaud, mais la tristesse de tout ce que l'on voit" ("But oh, the sadness, Golaud, the sadness of everything you see"), almost overwhelming in its poignance. André Vessières is the best of the three singers of Arkël, having more power and variety of tone and conveying a greater depth of feeling than the other two. There is not much to choose between the Geneviève but, on balance, I think Philips's Rita Gorr is the best. All of them miss the finer points in the reading of the letter in Act 1. I cannot help wishing that Debussy had omitted some of the repetitions of "petit père" in the painful scene (Act 3) in which Golaud tries to find out from the child Yniold the exact relationship between Pelléas and Mélisande, but the singers of this part all cope with their difficult part successfully.

In the new recording Jacques Jansen is less good, I think, than he was in the H.M.V. wartime recording of the work but, if lacking in subtlety, he is acceptable. Both Pierre Mollet (Decca) and Camille Maurane (Philips) are admirable throughout, and more full of ardour in the great love scene of Act 4. Maurane has the most attractive vocal quality of all and moves more easily than the other two in the upper reaches of the vocal line, and both have greater variety of expression and feeling for the phrase than Jansen.

A test case is the exquisite four-bar phrase—one of the most beautiful in all music—Pelléas has to sing, in the Act 4 love scene, to the words "On dirait que ta voix a passé sur la mer au printemps" ("One would think that your voice had came over the sea in the spring") (vocal score, p. 243). Jansen misses the sensuous magic of this; the other two find it.

Needless to say, Victoria de los Angeles sings her part very beautifully, and often with a touching sweetness—her whispered "Pelléas" (in Act 4) is indeed memorable—but I do feel that Suzanne Danco's voice (Decca) fits the strange, lost, child-like character of the girl more perfectly. It cannot have been easy for de los Angeles to subdue the native warmth of her voice: she does so with great skill and she is extremely moving in the death scene (Act 5)—an absolute masterpiece of dramatic writing. Heinz Rehfuss (Decca) is, to my mind, the best Golaud, very good though the other two are. He moves one to greater compassion for the tortured soul of the unhappy man and carries the weight of the terrible scene of Golaud's jealous rage in Act 4, when he so brutally assaults Mélisande, more successfully than Gérard Souzay who is, in general, a colder, more austere exponent of the part. Decca's André Vessières is superb in Arkël's monologue in this scene.

There are many felicities in André Cluytens' handling of the lovely score—particularly in the matter of orchestral tone—but one has only to play the luminous introduction to Act 3, the anguished interlude between Scenes 2 & 3 of Act 4—better recorded, however, by H.M.V—or the deeply moving orchestral passage after the death of Mélisande, in the Decca set to see how superior, artistically and musically, Ansermet is to his colleagues. The exactness

and sound of the high trumpet tone, and of the horns, on this last page (305) are quite marvellous. In the same way Ansermet makes the love scene glow with passion, but without in any way driving it along as Jean Fournet does.

The Decca recording is on four discs, the other two on three—a point to bear in mind, though the extra expense is well worth while. Of the two cheaper sets I would certainly chose the new H.M.V. because I cannot take to Janine Micheau's Mélisande, and not even the fine performances of Michel Roux and Camille Maurane would compensate for that.

The balance, in the H.M.V. set favours the voices more than in the other two. Both of these, let me emphasise, have very real virtues; but, for me, Ansermet alone has penetrated to the heart of this hauntingly poignant and lovely score and the Decca recording remains one of the finest things the gramophone has given us. A.R.

DONIZETTI. (*a*) **Lucia di Lammermoor:** " Fra poco a me ricoverò . . . Tu che a Dio spiegasti l'ali " (Act 3).
BELLINI. (*b*) **Norma:** " Meco all' altar di Venere" (Act 1). (*a* & *b*) **Mario del Monaco** (tenor), (*b*) **Athos Cesarini** (tenor) with (*a*) **New Symphony Orchestra of London** and (*b*) **St. Cecilia Orchestra, Rome,** both conducted by **Alberto Erede.** Decca CEP516 (7 in., 15s. 3½d.).

The *Norma* scene is presented complete, with recitative ("Svanir le voci"), cavatina and cabaletta, Flavio's utterances and off-stage Gallic chorus. At least it should be off-stage—Bellini has written a passage which sounds wonderful in the theatre, as the two Romans stop to listen to the war-signals and shuddering gong-strokes that seem to come from three valleys away—but in the recording there is no perspective effect. Del Monaco declaims the recitative with vigour; in the aria he merely fills the phrases with big tone, without bothering to make them shapely or expressive. He does not think, for example, to let some tenderness enter his tone at " quella vergine celeste ", or utter the words in a loving way. The *Lucia* scene opens with its recitative, " Tombe degl' avi miei ", but is otherwise presented as a solo, without chorus or Bide-the-Bent, and of course with the passage between " Fra poco a me " and " Tu che a Dio " omitted. The singing is monotonous. Good recording, and good value in actual recorded time: the *Norma* side is 8′ 25″, the *Lucia* 7′ 25″. A.P.

DVORAK. Rusalka: "Gleitender Mond du ". (Song to the Moon.),
RIMSKY-KORSAKOV. The Czar's Bride: " Lass uns in den Garten gehn" (Cavatina). **Anny Schlemm** (soprano). **Radio Symphony Orchestra of Berlin** conducted by **Wolfgang Rennert.** D.G.G. EPL30260 (7 in., 16s. 8½d.).

Rusalka's " Song to the Moon ", from Dvořák's opera, is generally well known but it is really exasperating of D.G.G. to give no particulars at all about the aria on the reverse from Rimsky-Korsakov's *The Czar's Bride*. Who sings it?—From which Act does it come?—What is it about?

I have no score of the opera, but as far as I can judge, the aria comes from the last Act and is sung by Marfa (or Marta). Betrothed to one man, coveted by another, and, as if that were not enough, seen and loved by the Tsar—who chooses her to be his bride—the poor girl, in the midst of plot and counter-plot, goes mad. Such is the situation when she sings the aria above, in which a clarinet recalls the lovely melody of her big aria in the previous Act and so " the green garden where with dear friends we used to play ". Gerald Abraham describes the entry of the clarinet, with this melody, as one of the most poignant moments in Russian opera.

Anny Schlemm's vocal line is smudgy and the top of her voice—in the Dvořák—somewhat constricted: but she sings expressively and the acoustic of the disc is excellent, as is also the accompanying. It would be good to have a recording of the Act 2 aria, always highly praised by the composer's biographers and critics. A.R.

MOUSSORGSKY. Sorochintsy Fair.
Cherevik **Latko Koroshetz** (bass)
Parassia **Vilma Bukovetz** (sop.)
Khivrya **Bogdana Stritar** (mezzo-sop.)
Gritzko **Miro Brajnik** (ten.)
Afanasy Ivanovich **Slavko Shtrukel** (ten.)
Kum **Friderik Lupsha** (bass)
The Gypsy **Andrey Andreev** (bass)
Satana **Samo Smerkol** (bass)
Chorus and Orchestra of the Slovenian National Opera, Ljubljana, conducted by **Samo Hubad.** Philips ABL3148-9 (two 12 in., 83s. 6d.).

Whenever one comes up against a Russian stage work, the first thing is to establish who composed it; for it often seems as if the main occupation of Russian musicians is writing each other's operas—after which everyone quarrels and claims it would be better another way. The habit of leaving works incomplete—whether through illness, loss of interest or plain indolence—seems to have been endemic among the famous nineteenth-century Russians; so that it should come as no particular surprise to learn, from an admirably comprehensive accompanying note by Paul Lamm, that Mussorgsky's *Sorochintsy Fair* has had to be orchestrated and completed by Liadov, Karatygin, Cui, Tcherepnin and, finally, Shebalin, whose version is the one here employed.

The story—a grotesque one, full of digressions and typically Russian muddles—is set in the Ukraine, whose national musical characteristics are mirrored in the score. Some form of lifeline, either the complete libretto (available for an extra 7s. 6d.), or the detailed account of the plot in the booklet issued with the discs, is absolutely imperative if anything whatever is to be made of this work. For, though the lyrical passages are easy enough to hang on to, the music of the broad humorous parts is scrappy to a degree; and it must be admitted that, attractive as are some of the melodies, their treatment is frequently very crude and thin. Only two sections are likely to be known to most people—the final *Gopak* and the *Night on the Bare Mountain*, which reappears here in a choral version to accompany the scene of Gritzko's nightmare.

The piece is played with gusto by the Ljubljana company, and the sheer high spirits they bring to it are infectious, even while one recognises the shortcomings in the performance. The orchestra is enthusiastic rather than polished, and the chorus very rough indeed, but the soloists are, many of them, of a high calibre. At the top of the list I would put Mme Stritar as the discontented scold and the tenor Shtrukel, who proves himself a first-rate character comedian, in the part of her gluttonous paramour. Their comic love-scene in Act 2 is a joy. The Parassia—a small part—is good, and the Gritzko has a suitably young-sounding ringing tenor. The Cherevik is too often careless about the exact pitching of his notes.

The recording has been made as if from a concert performance, with little suggestion of stage perspective or dramatic placing of the voices, and one cannot help regretting that for so unfamiliar a work (which, so far as I can recollect, has not been seen in this country since Jay Pomeroy's production at the Cambridge Theatre in the early days of the war) more attention was not given to " production ". Those with perfect pitch must also steel themselves to transposing the recording down a semitone mentally. Still, as a curiosity, this recording is well worth hearing. L.S.

SMETANA. The Bartered Bride: " Endlich allein "; " Ich weiss Euch einen lieben Schatz". **Anny Schlemm** (soprano), **Paul Kuen** (tenor). **Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra** conducted by **Fritz Lehmann.** D.G.G. EPL30065 (7 in., 16s. 8½d.).

The Bartered Bride came to London in 1939 as *Die verkaufte Braut*, with Hilde Konetzni and Richard Tauber; but do we really want Marienchen and Hans and Wenzel on records now? Not, I should think, when we have a Mařenka and Vasek as good as this pair in the current Covent Garden production, who could do it in English for us. Still, the companies seem to show a fondness for producing in this country records, in a non-original vernacular, which must have been intended in the first place for local consumption. Anny Schlemm sings Mařenka's aria with feeling and attractive tone; and in the duet Paul Kuen gives a most ably sung and lively perform-

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ance as the stuttering Vasek. But it has none of the " feel " of the Prague performance on Supraphon. A.P.

ZENAIDA PALII. Xerxes: "Ombra mai fu " (Handel). **Orfeo et Eurydice:** "J'ai perdu " (Gluck). **Il Trovatore:** "Stride la vampa" (Verdi). **Carmen:** " En vain pour éviter " (Bizet). **Samson et Dalila:** " Mon coeur s'ouvre " (Saint-Saëns). **Zenaida Palii** (mezzo-soprano). **Prague National Theatre Orchestra** conducted by **Vaclav Kaslik.**

ALEXANDER SVED. I Pagliacci: " Si puo " (Leoncavallo). **La Traviata:** " Di provenza il mar " (Verdi). **Il Trovatore:** "Il balen del suo sorriso'. (Verdi). **Carmen:** "Votre toast . . ." (Bizet). **Prague National Theatre Orchestra** conducted by **Dr. Ladislav Sip.** Supraphon LPV207 (12 in., 39s. 7½d.).

In the composite art of singing various factors weigh differently with each judge. Both these singers, for instance, can be called distinguished. Both have a sizeable personality. And both have heavy vibratos, often allowed to get out of hand to a point which approaches the threshold of pain. Mr. Sved, the Hungarian baritone, was, as I recall, rather a dull and undaemonic Scarpia (to noisy Mme Cigna) at Covent Garden ; and his account of the Toreador Song on this recital record is almost ludicrously tame and nervously nasal. He makes very heavy weather of the two hackneyed Verdi solos, which need, at the very least, the finesse of a Leonard Warren (to put it no higher) to be endurable for several repetitions. The *Pagliacci* prologue is somewhat slow, but in a ruminative, " old trouper " style it is quite impressive ; and would hold the audience in the pre-curtain excitement of real performance.

Mme Palii is a Rumanian legend and never, as far as I know, sang here in opera. In spite of the rather heavy and laboured beat in her voice, it is a very magnificent organ—in the Brunskill line, with very rich resonant low notes and a fairly smooth scale. Her Delilah is sumptuous and only a shade clumsy, being over fruity and, as I said above, rather unsteady. But there is good musical sense in the Handel (as well as some splendid " baritone " notes at the bottom). The Gluck proceeds at a sensible pace and with some imagination and the Azucena scene sounds impressive. Mme Palli is said to be a magnificent Carmen on the stage, but the card scene here lacks light and shade. The French sounds common (as no doubt Carmen's French might), but there is little imaginative colouring of the phrases —for example the "annonçant le bonheur", a point at which two other non-French Carmens, Supervia and Mary Garden, let the idea of a happy ending momentarily gleam in their voices !

The recording is perfectly acceptable, and for voice-fanciers and legend collectors there is some interest in ths disc. For those merely seeking good accounts of the solos listed, a search elsewhere will yield better results. P.H.-W.

VERDI. Rigoletto.

Rigoletto **Giuseppe Taddei** (bar.)
Gilda **Lina Pagliughi** (sop.)
Duke of Mantua **Ferruccio Tagliavini** (ten.)
Sparafucile **Giulio Neri** (bass)
Maddalena **Irma Colasanti** (mezzo-sop.)
Giovanna **Tilde Fiorio** (mezzo-sop.)
Count of Monterone **Antonio Zerbini** (bass)
Marullo **Alberto Albertini** (bar.)
Borsa **Tommaso Soley** (ten.)
Turin Radio Symphony Orchestra, Cetra Chorus conducted by **Angelo Questa.** Chorus Master: **Giulio Mogliotti.** Cetra 1247 (three 12 in., £8 12s. 6d.).

It is strange that, with three *Rigolettos* and four *Traviatas* in the domestic catalogues, there should have been—until now—no recommendable version of either opera. But both Mr. Shawe-Taylor and Mr. Hope-Wallace have in these pages told us that when the Cetra *Rigoletto* arrived at last we should be happy with it ; and indeed now that it has come it proves no disappointment.

The leader in the field before was the Columbia Scala set, with Callas, Di Stefano and Gobbi under Serafin. P.H.-W. has described its considerable merits, and pointed out politely but clearly the various ways in which it is in the last resort unsatisfactory. Prima donna and baritone both tend to indulge in an "over-elaborate" artistry, amounting at times almost to dissection of the music ; and Serafin's tempi are " stately " to the point of dullness. It would be more pointful to consider the Cetra recording in relation to a rival set that is on its way, the R.C.A. one mentioned last month by Harold Schonberg, with Roberta Peters, Björling and Merrill. A full review would obviously be inappropriate until the R.C.A. is issued in this country ; but I have heard it on American pressings (enviably packaged, through the translation of the built-in libretto is much too free), and—just for interest—will drop in a comment or two about the performance. Decca, H.M.V. and Cetra all take six sides over the opera ; Columbia takes five ; and R.C.A. only four, which will bring its cost down considerably—very much below that of the Cetra. The disadvantages entailed are disconcerting breaks for the turn-overs, and a cut of " Ah veglia, o donna " as a baritone solo and Gilda's response. The total playing-time of the Cetra, by the way, is 110 minutes, so that its lay-out across six sides is fairly generous. It is uncut, except for the usual shortening of strettas. "Possente amor", the cabaletta to "Parmi veder", is included here (not in the R.C.A. set).

Pagliughi, Taglavini and Taddei seem to me, in each case, to be the most enjoyable exponents of their respective roles—happy state of affairs for a reviewer, who so often must try to balance the advantages of the fine tenor in this set with the lovely soprano in that: questa o quella ? And talking about Questa, his handling of the score is beautifully alive and sensitive. It is traditional in the best way, without personal idiosyncracies of tempo. He takes all Verdi's specifically orchestral points, never dictates to the singers, nor drags them, but encourages and supports them in expressive and dramatic utterance. Pagliughi's Gilda is filled with delightful touches. She sounds fresh and youthful. There is occasionally that slight " whiteness " in the tone ; on the other hand she has many delightful little moments of temperament and resolve : when, for example, she tells Giovanni how she would say " T'amo ! ", with an attractive little push in the attack that is full of character. She can still take a strong high D flat at the end of the love duet. " Caro nome " is transposed into E flat, but sung with a sweet, true, pure tone, notes dropped deliciously into place, a lovely cadenza at that close where Covent Garden audiences try to drown the coda in applause, and a more than passable present-day trill (not the less beautiful upward flight) at the end. Miss Peters opts for the high ending, and is punished by the emergence of a wobble-trill on her high E (also on B of the earlier cadenza). Otherwise her singing is true and clear, though never artistic in the way that Pagliughi's is. Pagliughi is especially lovely dropping in the triplets over Rigoletto's "Piangi, piangi fanciulla".

Taddei scores over Gobbi by reason of a far more beautiful voice, and over Merrill (who resembles Warren in the H.M.V. set in his fine baritone and less-than-meaningful delivery of the words) in dramatic impact. " Pari, siamo ", " Cortigiani ", " Sì, vendetta " and the final scene all come off splendidly, and I must draw special attention to the tenderness of his tone in " Piangi, piangi ". Tagliavini is an airy and buoyant Duke, who tosses off his two gay arias with brio, and sings "Parmi veder" with feeling. He addresses Lady Ceprano in melting tones that do much to explain his success in Verona. The only moment I don't like (and it is only a moment) is the slip into his dulcet croon for the middle of the " Ella mi fu rapita " recitative, at " E dovè ora sarà quell' angiol ", and the over-forceful contrast at the reprise of the opening words. Björling in this role sounds as well as ever, but he is far less dashing, and uncharacteristically prone to display his rich voice. (Indeed he addresses Gilda in the second scene as if he and she were standing on opposite sides of Trafalgar Square.) Irma Colasanti, the Maddalena, is adequate though unremarkable ; Giulio Neri's Sparafucile is excellent, very firm and powerful and full of character. The scornful way he flings out a remark in the last act (in reply to Maddalena's gush over the Duke, " Oh sì, venti scudi ne dà di prodotto ") is a characteristic example of the way in which this performance seems more constantly " alive " than the others. Alberto Albertini is a good Marullo, and Antonio Zerbini an imposing Monterone.

Surfaces are not good on my copies. The recording is no miracle of brilliance, but perfectly satisfactory. A.P.

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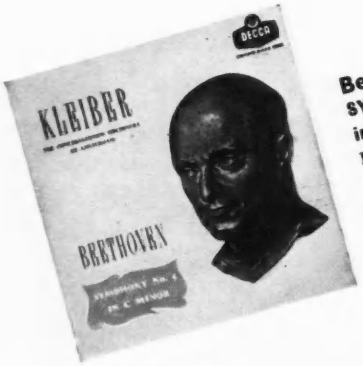
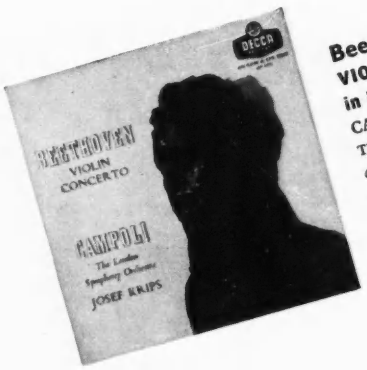


Beethoven
SYMPHONY No. 5
in C minor, Op. 67
ERICH KLEIBER *conducting*
THE CONCERTGEBOUW ORCHESTRA
LXT 5358

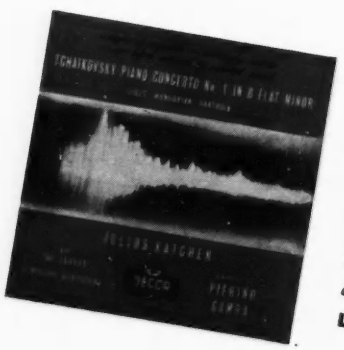
Beethoven
SYMPHONY No. 8
in F major, Op. 93
KARL BÖHM *conducting*
THE VIENNA PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

Mendelssohn
'ITALIAN' SYMPHONY
No. 4 in A major, Op. 90
JOSEF KRIPS *conducting*
THE LONDON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
LXT 5361



Beethoven
VIOLIN CONCERTO
in D major, Op. 61
CAMPOLI *with*
THE LONDON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
conducted by JOSEF KRIPS
LXT 5352

Rimsky-Korsakov
SCHEHERAZADE
Symphonic suite, Op. 35
ERNEST ANSERMET *conducting*
THE PARIS CONSERVATOIRE ORCHESTRA
Solo Violin: PIERRE NERINI
LXT 5082



Tchaikovsky
PIANO CONCERTO No. 1
in B flat minor, Op. 23

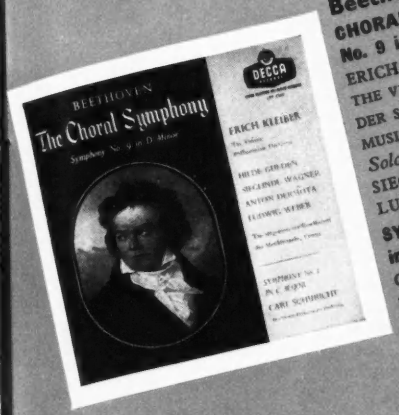
Liszt
HUNGARIAN FANTASIA
for Piano and Orchestra
JULIUS KATCHEN *with*
THE LONDON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
conducted by PIERINO GAMBA
LXT 5164

Prokofiev
CLASSICAL SYMPHONY
No. 1 in D major Op. 25 (*a*)

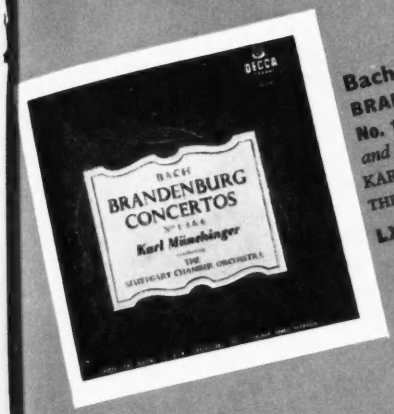
Bizet
SYMPHONY No. 1
in C major (*b*)
ERNEST ANSERMET *conducting*
(*a*) THE PARIS CONSERVATOIRE ORCHESTRA
(*b*) L'ORCHESTRE DE LA SUISSE ROMANDE
LXT 5380

Brahms
SYMPHONY No. 1
in C minor, Op. 68
EDUARD VAN BEINUM *conducting*
THE CONCERTGEBOUW ORCHESTRA
LXT 5366

every one an masterpiece



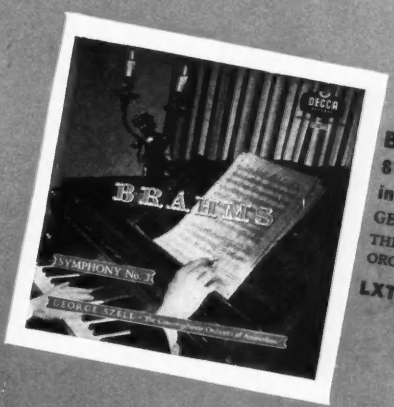
Beethoven
CHORAL SYMPHONY
No. 9 in D minor, Op. 125 (*3 sides*)
ERICH KLEIBER *conducting*
THE VIENNA PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA *and*
DER SINGVEREIN DER GESELLSCHAFT DER MUSIKFREUNDE, VIENNA
Soloists: HILDE GUEDEN, SIEGLINDE WAGNER, ANTON DERMOTA, LUDWIG WEBER
SYMPHONY NO. 1
in C major, Op. 21 (*on 4th side*)
CARL SCHURICHT *conducting*
THE VIENNA PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA
LXT 5362-3



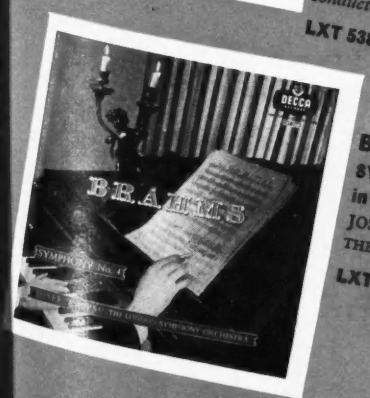
Bach
BRANDENBURG CONCERTOS
No. 1 in F major; No. 3 in G major
and **No. 6 in B flat major**
KARL MÜNCHINGER *conducting*
THE STUTTGART CHAMBER ORCHESTRA
LXT 5198

Bach
BRANDENBURG CONCERTOS
No. 2 in F major *and* **No. 4 in G major;**
No. 5 in D major
KARL MÜNCHINGER *conducting*
THE STUTTGART CHAMBER ORCHESTRA
LXT 5199

Handel
ARIAS AND CHORUSES FROM 'MESSIAH'
Comfort ye my people; Every valley; For unto us a Child is born; There were shepherds; And lo! the Angel of the Lord; And the Angel said unto them; And suddenly there was with the Angel; Glory to God; Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened; He shall feed His flock; He was despised; How beautiful are the feet; Why do the nations; Hallelujah Chorus; I know that my Redeemer liveth; The trumpet shall sound; Worthy is the Lamb
JENNIFER VYVYAN, NORMA PROCTER, GEORGE MARAN *and* OWEN BRANNIGAN
with THE LONDON PHILHARMONIC CHOIR *and* THE LONDON PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA
GEORGE MALCOLM (*Harpsichord*)
RALPH DOWNES (*Organ*)
conducted by SIR ADRIAN BOULT
LXT 5383

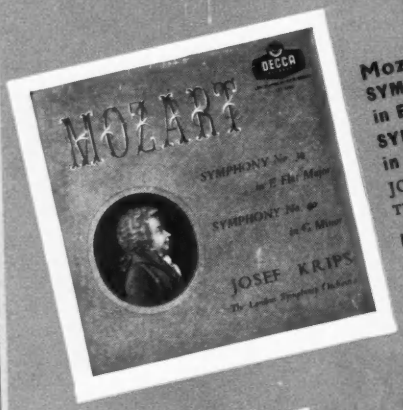


Brahms
SYMPHONY No. 3
in F major, Op. 90
GEORGE SZELL *conducting*
THE CONCERTGEBOUW ORCHESTRA
LXT 5367



Brahms
SYMPHONY No. 4
in E minor, Op. 98
JOSEF KRIPS *conducting*
THE LONDON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
LXT 5368

Johann Strauss (arr. Dor
GRADUATION BALL
(*Complete ballet*)
ANATOLE FISTOULARI *conducting*
THE NEW SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA OF LONDON
LXT 5372

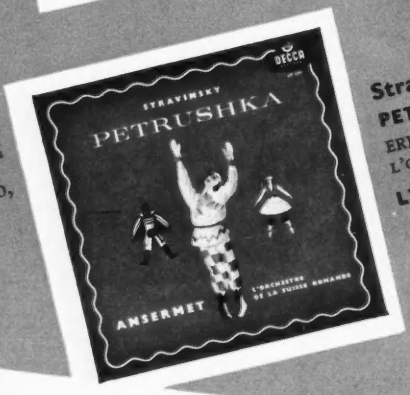


Mozart
SYMPHONY No. 39
in E flat major, K.543
SYMPHONY No. 40
in G minor, K.550
JOSEF KRIPS *conducting*
THE LONDON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
LXT 5356

Rachmaninov
PIANO CONCERTO No. 2
in C minor, Op. 18
CLIFFORD CURZON *with*
THE LONDON PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA
conducted by SIR ADRIAN BOULT
LXT 5178

Verdi
Highlights from AIDA
Celeste Aida; Or, di Vulcano al tempio; Ritorna vincitor; Mortal, diletto ai numi; Fu la sorte dell' armi; O patria mia; Rivedrai le foreste imbalsamate; Nel fiero anelito; Vedi? di morte l'angelo; O terra addio

RENATA TEBALDI, MARIO DEL MONACO, EBE STIGNANI, DARIO CASELLI, FERNANDO CORENA, ALDO PROTTI *with* THE ORCHESTRA AND CHORUS OF L'ACCADEMIA DI SANTA CECILIA, ROME, *conducted by* ALBERTO EREDE
LXT 5385



Stravinsky
PETRUSHKA (*Complete ballet*)
ERNEST ANSERMET *conducting*
L'ORCHESTRE DE LA SUISSE ROMANDE
LXT 5375

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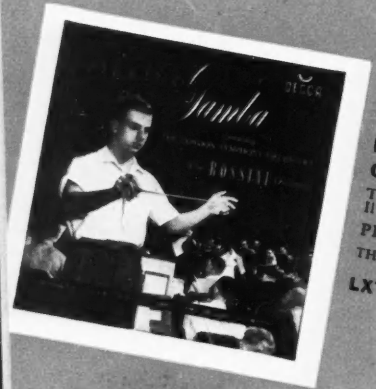
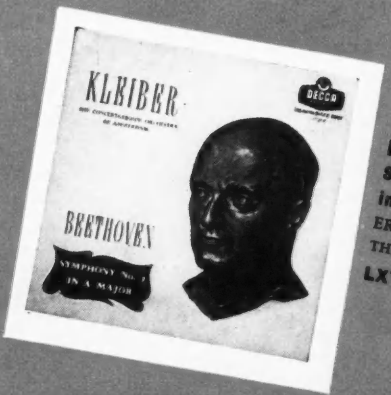


Rossini
OVERTURES
The Siege of Corinth; William Tell; Tancredi; Il Signor Bruschino; La Cenerentola;
PIERINO GAMBA *conducting*
THE LONDON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
LXT 5137

Handel
ROYAL FIREWORKS MUSIC
WATER MUSIC—**Suite (I)**
EDUARD VAN BEINUM *conducting*
(*a*) THE CONCERTGEBOUW ORCHESTRA
(*b*) THE LONDON PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA
LXT 5379

Tchaikovsky
NUTCRACKER SUITE
Casse Noisette, Op. 71
ANATOLE FISTOULARI *conducting*
THE PARIS CONSERVATOIRE ORCHESTRA
LXT 5371



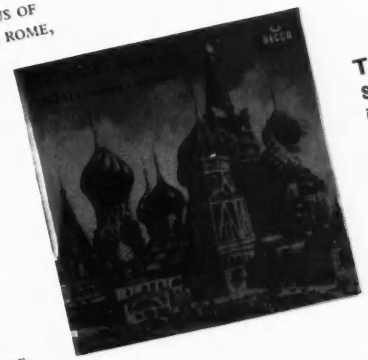
Beethoven
SYMPHONY No. 7
in A major, Op. 92
ERICH KLEIBER *conducting*
THE CONCERTGEBOUW ORCHESTRA
LXT 5360

Puccini
Highlights from LA BOHEME

Che gelida manina; Si, mi chiamano Mimì; Ehi Rodolfo — O soave fanciulla; Quando me'n vo'; Donde lieta uscì; Addio dolce svegliare; In un coupè — O Mimì tu più non torni; Sono andati?; Torno al nido la rondine e cinguetta; Che ha detto il medico?

RENATA TEBALDI, GIACINTO PRANDELLI, HILDE GUEDEN, GIOVANNI INGHILLERI, FERNANDO CORENA, RAPHAEL ARIE, MELCHIORRE LUISE
with THE ORCHESTRA AND CHORUS OF L'ACCADEMIA DI SANTA CECILIA, ROME, *conducted by* ALBERTO EREDE

LXT 5387



Tchaikovsky
SYMPHONY No. 4
in F minor, Op. 36

ATAULFO ARGENTA *conducting*
L'ORCHESTRE DE LA SUISSE ROMANDE

LXT 5125

Falla
THE THREE-CORNERED HAT

(*Complete ballet*)
ERNEST ANSERMET *conducting*
L'ORCHESTRE DE LA SUISSE ROMANDE

LXT 5357

Puccini
Highlights from TOSCA

Recondita armonia; Mario! Mario!; Son qui; Non la sospiri; Or tutto è chiaro; Ed io venivo a lui; Tre sbirri; Orsù, Tosca, parlate; La povera mia cena; Già mi dicon venal; Vissi d'arte; E lucevan le stelle; O dolci mani; L'ora . . . Son pronto

RENATA TEBALDI, GIUSEPPE CAMPORA, ENZO MASCHERINI, PIERO DI PALMA, ANTONIO SACCHETTI, FERNANDO CORE *with* THE ORCHESTRA AND CHORUS OF L'ACCADEMIA DI SANTA CECILIA, ROME, *conducted by* ALBERTO EREDE

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—Suite (*a*)

CHESTRA

Beethoven
PIANO CONCERTO No. 4
in G major, Op. 58

WILHELM BACKHAUS *with*
THE VIENNA PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA
conducted by CLEMENS KRAUSS

LXT 5354

Adam
GISELLE (*Complete ballet*)

RICHARD BLAREAU *conducting*
L'ORCHESTRE DU THEATRE NATIONAL DE L'OPERA, PARIS

LXT 5378

Mozart
FAMOUS OVERTURES

Don Giovanni; Die Entführung aus Serail; The Impresario; The Magic Fl Cosi fan Tutte; The Marriage of Figaro

JOSEF KRIPS *conducting*
THE LONDON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

LXT 5376

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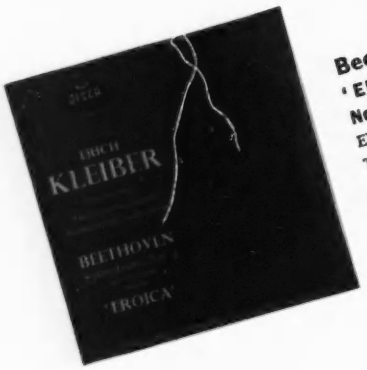
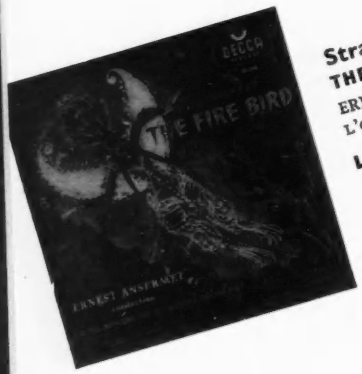


Beethoven
'EROICA' SYMPHONY
No. 3 in E flat major, Op. 55
ERICH KLEIBER *conducting*
THE CONCERTGEBOUW ORCHESTRA
LXT 5215

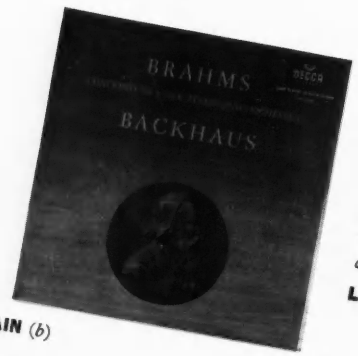


Stravinsky
THE FIREBIRD (*Complete ballet*)
ERNEST ANSERMET *conducting*
L'ORCHESTRE DE LA SUISSE ROMANDE
LXT 5115

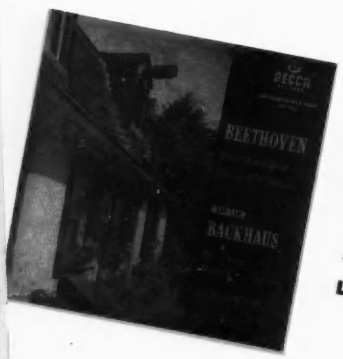
Beethoven
'PASTORAL' SYMPHONY
No. 6 in F major, Op. 68
ERICH KLEIBER *conducting*
THE CONCERTGEBOUW ORCHESTRA
LXT 5359

Greig
PIANO CONCERTO
in A minor, Op. 16 (*a*)

Falla
NIGHTS IN THE GARDENS OF SPAIN (*b*)
CLIFFORD CURZON *with*
(*a*) THE LONDON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
conducted by ANATOLE FISTOULARI
(*b*) THE NEW SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA OF LONDON
conducted by ENRIQUE JORDA
LXT 5165



Brahms
PIANO CONCERTO No. 1
in D minor, Op. 15
WILHELM BACKHAUS *with*
THE VIENNA PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA
conducted by KARL BÖHM
LXT 5364



Beethoven
PIANO CONCERTO No. 3
in C minor, Op. 37
WILHELM BACKHAUS *with*
THE VIENNA PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA
conducted by KARL BÖHM
LXT 5353

Rachmaninov
RHAPSODY ON A THEME OF PAGANINI, Op. 43

Dohnányi
VARIATIONS ON A NURSERY SONG
Op. 25
JULIUS KATCHEN *with*
THE LONDON PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA
conducted by SIR ADRIAN BOULT
LXT 5374

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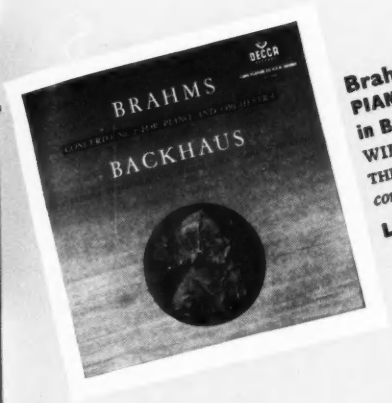

Brahms
PIANO CONCERTO No. 2
in B flat major, Op. 83
WILHELM BACKHAUS *with*
THE VIENNA PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA
conducted by CARL SCHURICHT
LXT 5365

Tchaikovsky
SYMPHONY No. 5
in E minor, Op. 64
GEORG SOLTI *conducting*
THE PARIS CONSERVATOIRE ORCHESTRA
LXT 5241

Beethoven
'EMPEROR' CONCERTO
No. 5 in E flat major
for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 73
WILHELM BACKHAUS *with*
THE VIENNA PHILHARMONIC ORCHEST
conducted by CLEMENS KRAUSS
LXT 5355

Dvořák
'NEW WORLD' SYMPHONY
No. 5 in E minor, Op. 95
RAFAEL KUBELIK *conducting*
THE VIENNA PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA
LXT 5291

Mozart
PIANO CONCERTO No. 27
in B flat major, K.595
WILHELM BACKHAUS *with*
THE VIENNA PHILHARMONIC ORCHEST
conducted by KARL BÖHM
SONATA No. 11
in A major, K.331
WILHELM BACKHAUS
LXT 5123

Handel
Return, O God of hosts—*Samson*
O thou that tellest good tidings—*Messiah*
Father of Heaven—*Judas Maccabaeus*
He was despised—*Messiah*
Bach
Qui sedes—*Mass in B minor*
Grief for sin—*St. Matthew Passion*
All is fulfilled—*St. John Passion*
Agnus Dei—*Mass in B minor*
KATHLEEN FERRIER
THE LONDON PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA
conducted by SIR ADRIAN BOULT
LXT 5382

Schubert
SYMPHONY No. 5
in B flat major
UNFINISHED
SYMPHONY
No. 8 in B minor
KARL BÖHM *conducting*
THE VIENNA
PHILHARMONIC ORCHEST
LXT 5381

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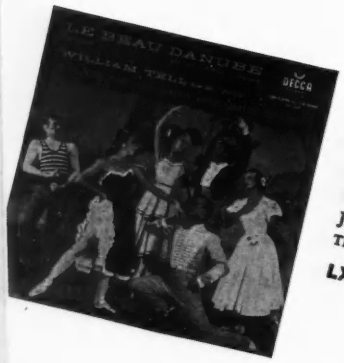
Puccini
Highlights from MADAMA BUTTERFLY
Viene la sera (love duet); Un bel dì vedremo; Scuoti quella fronda; Intermezzo; Tu? tu? piccolo Iddio
RENATA TEBALDI, NELL RANKIN, GIUSEPPE CAMPORA
with THE ORCHESTRA AND CHORUS OF L'ACCADEMIA DI SANTA CECILIA, ROME
conducted by ALBERTO EREDE
LXT 5384

Tchaikovsky
'PATHETIQUE' SYMPHONY
No. 6 in B minor, Op. 74
ERICH KLEIBER *conducting*
THE PARIS CONSERVATOIRE ORCHESTRA
LXT 5370

Tchaikovsky
VIOLIN CONCERTO
in D major, Op. 35
RUGGIERO RICCI *with*
THE NEW SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA OF LONDON
conducted by SIR MALCOLM SARGENT
LXT 5373

Vivaldi
THE FOUR SEASONS
Le quattro stagioni
No. 1. La Primavera (Spring)
No. 2. L'Estate (Summer)
No. 3. L'Autunno (Autumn)
No. 4. L'Inverno (Winter)
KARL MÜNCHINGER *conducting*
THE STUTTGART CHAMBER ORCHESTRA
Solo Violin: REINHOLD BARCHET
LXT 5377



Johann Strauss (arr. Désormière)
LE BEAU DANUBE (*Complete ballet*)
Rossini
WILLIAM TELL (*Ballet music*)
JEAN MARTINON *conducting*
THE LONDON PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA
LXT 5149

Delibes
COPPELIA—Ballet suite
SYLVIA—Ballet suite
ROGER DESORMIERE *conducting*
THE PARIS CONSERVATOIRE ORCHESTRA
LXT 5217

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VERDI. Il Trovatore.
Il Conte di Luna **Rolando Panerai** (bar.)
Leonora **Maria Meneghini Callas** (sop.)
Azucena **Fedora Barbieri** (mezzo-sop.)
Manrico **Giuseppe di Stefano** (ten.)
Ferrando **Nicola Zaccaria** (bass)
Ines **Luisa Villa** (mezzo-sop.)
Ruiz **Renato Ercolani** (ten.)
A Messenger **Renato Ercolani** (ten.)
An old Gypsy **Giulio Mauri** (bass)
Orchestra and Chorus of La Scala Opera House, Milan, conducted by **Herbert von Karajan.** Chorus Master: Norberto Mola. Columbia 33CXS1483, 33CX1484-5 (five 12 in. sides, 110s. 6½d.).

Cellini (3/54) ALP1112-3
Erede (11/56) LXT5260-2

The lining up of casts of singers for these Verdi issues ought in a way to simplify criticism. It is as if we had three well tried opera companies in town at the same moment. At the H.M.V. theatre it will be Mme Milanov and Björling, with Leonard Warren; at the Decca, Mme Tebaldi and Signor Del Monaco will be airing the griefs of Leonora and her troubadour, while most recent of all, the Columbia outfit stages Mme Callas and Signor Di Stefano in the same roles.

By now, one might suppose, everyone roughly knows how he or she stands in respect of these leading artists. It is only when a reviewer like myself fails to recapitulate in detail all the virtues and failings of these long-established leading interpreters that one realises that angry pens are being held over inkpots ready to denounce any such shortcomings.

For the reasonably initiated, however, I must say that this *Trovatore* set seems to me very much what you might expect it to be from the label. Di Stefano, who sings so well in lyric roles is not the ideal robusto for Manrico and if what you want above all is a stupendous "Di quella pira", then Del Monaco on Decca is your man: if you want a genuinely heroic Manrico with a bit more finesse, then Björling on H.M.V. is the choice. But Di Stefano sings musically, without any faltering or that clumsiness which in actual performance nowadays seems almost inescapable. His "Mal reggendo" and the whole of the second scene with Azucena are well managed and pleasing. In the opening passages of the prison scene he is perhaps less affecting than Björling; his production is rather metalic and the caressing and cajoling tones appropriate to lulling a mother to sleep do not come easily. As to the rest, Signor Di Stefano is in his usual form; alert, reasonably tuneful and cutting a strong and on the whole pleasing line. Whether he is your idea of a Manrico must remain a personal choice. Mme Barbieri sounds very much the same as on H.M.V., where she fills the same role, slightly better in detail here and there and enjoying a more vivid recording. This beefy and energetic Azucena is less coarse and chesty than the one the singer preferred at Covent Garden earlier in the year, but the show-stopping elements (which in fact brought down that easily satisfied house) are truly recaptured. I don't think there should be many complaints, though it is far from rating as pure bel canto.

The role of Leonora is one in which I have much admired Mme Callas. Her assumption is that of a great lady, as it should be; and in the two big arias I have heard her phrase the music like a virtuoso violinist with a mastery which marked her off from most other Leonoras of the common sort. Most of that grandeur is evident in this recording. But to enjoy Mme Callas you have—if I may commit an Irishism—to like her in the first place. If you can accept that half closed throat and the occasional curdling skirls and the sagging beat on the top notes, all will seem magical. She again brings to the most hackneyed music a gift of recreating it as if it were being sung for the first time. She feels the sense of words (as, for example, neither Tebaldi nor Milanov seem to sense them at all). On the other hand, considered from a purely tonal angle, the purely sensuous side of her singing offers little here to compare to the ravishing sounds which issue from the Leonoras of Tebaldi (in "Tacea la notte") or Mme Milanov in the introduction to "D'amor sull' ali". But the actual spanning and placing of the phrases are lovely and in the rapid and difficult caballetta to the former aria Mme Callas, who is far more nippy with her shakes and gruppetti, though sticking to a fairly safe pace, shows up as a much more practised coloratura singer than either of her rivals. In the scene with the count which comes after the Miserere, Mme Callas is altogether astonishing in her realisation of the drama in her dynamic phrasing, making her rivals sound merely like also rans in a steeple chase. "Mira d'acerbe lagrime" and the vengeful glee of "Vivra! Contend il giubilo" are perfectly in character. Altogether, provided you like Mme Callas's strange vocal production, you are likely to forget the other two "complete" Leonoras. Only in one place does she a little disappoint me; that is her moment of amazement in the Convent scene, "E deggio — e posso crederlo?", not nearly as thrilling as expected. But the working up of the ensemble thereafter is exceptionally clear in this new issue. Indeed I do not recall a *Trovatore* in which so many of the words came through so clearly.

The baritone, Panerai, is better all round than Savarese on Decca, and slightly more authentic than Leonard Warren, besides sounding more in character most of the time. There are a few dubious passages of uncertain intonation. But his is an ample, warm and largely well used voice with a sense of style which does not jib at "Il balen", though one can hardly call this a bel canto performance either. Without any malice I should describe Panerai as a baritone whom one should get to know first in the theatre, where he has a lot of presence, large eyes and general allure of generosity. He is well up to measure in this issue and the minor parts, such as Ferrando, are unusually good. For an Italian chorus, the ensemble is very creditable.

What I said about the clearness of the words reflects credit, of course, on the recording, which is a very good job and noticeably an improvement on H.M.V.'s *Trovatore*, which in 1954 itself sounded so wonderfully lifelike. But what of Herbert von Karajan's handling of the score as a whole? Well, I find it superior to Erede (Decca), who sounds laggard and cautious by comparison. But the excitements are not always of a very Verdian kind and von Karajan often seems to drive the singers without at the same time achieving that justifiable *rightness* that we associate with Toscanini's Verdi. Cellini in the H.M.V. did one or two questionable things, but von Karajan often whips up the tempo in a way which seems to have no warrant in the score or the nature of the music, as if he simply felt that here was a place where the orchestra might as well assert itself. Equally some of the rallentandos sound, not natural, but grudgingly exaggerated, as if a concession to an absurd fashion. There are few untidy passages. Superficially at least it is a "hot" performance and I don't expect most listeners to share my reserve in this matter of the true Verdian style not being achieved.

In sum, then, a *Trovatore* of dazzlingly clear words and vivid singing, with something especially haunting about Mme Callas's strange Leonora and stirring if not absolutely convincing conductorship. Not the last word, and not an easy winner over the four-year-old H.M.V. set, but a decided advance. P.H.-W.

CORELLI RECITAL. La Fanciulla del West (Puccini): "Ch'ella mi creda"; "Or son sei mesi". **La Tosca** (Puccini): "E lucevan le stelle"; "Recondita armonia". **La Favorita** (Donizetti): "Una vergin, un angel di Dio". **Turandot** (Puccini): "Non piangere, Liù"; "Nessun dorma". **Adriana Lecouvreur** (Cilea): "L'anima ho stanca"; "La dolcissima effigie". **Franco Corelli** (tenor), **Turin Radio Symphony Orchestra** conducted by **Arturo Basile** and **Fulvio Vernizzi.** Cetra LPV45005 (10 in., 50s. 0d.).
Andrea Chenier (Giordano): "Un dì nell' azzuro spazio"; "Come un bel dì di maggio". **Franco Corelli** (tenor), **Turin Radio Symphony Orchestra** conducted by **Arturo Basile.** Cetra SPO1010 (7 in., 17s. 6d.).

Franco Corelli, as you must all know by now, is the big handsome Italian tenor whose looks, physique, and hefty voice have all played their part in bringing him to the forefront. He made his British début at Covent Garden this summer, singing Cavaradossi to Milanov's Tosca. The hefty voice alone is what we must judge him by on this record. It is thick and solid and powerful, pleasant but not positively attractive in its tone quality. The timbre is unvaried, and the effect monotonous even

within a single aria. There seems to be the potential of a fine singer here, but the style is sluggish, unformed.

In the 10-inch disc, the recording of the orchestra is rather muzzy, and the voice takes on a slight edge which spoils, for example, what seems to be a ringing climax at the end of "La dolcissima effigie" or on "Tosca, sei tu". The little 7-inch is more forward in sound, but offers poor value: "Come un bel dì" lasts only three minutes. The Improvviso, starting earlier than usual, at "Colpito qui m'avete", makes a long side (this is a standard, not an EP, 45), but some of the singing is flat, and monotonous tone-colour is particularly wrong in an aria whose effect depends largely on sudden switches of mood. A.P.

VERDI. La Traviata: "E strano.. Ah! fors è lui" (Act 1); "Addio del passato" (Act 3). **Rigoletto:** "Tutte le feste al tempio" (Act 2). **Gwen Catley** (soprano), **Pro Arte Orchestra** conducted by **Stanford Robinson.** Pye CEC32000 (7 in., 15s. 3½d.).

It is very pleasant to have this disc of Gwen Catley's charming and musical singing of the above Verdi arias. She brings out much of the poignance in "Addio del passato" (though the reading of the letter needs a greater depth of emotion) and is excellent in "Ah! fors è lui", placing her high notes clearly and never failing in purity of tone. She is a little more taxed in "Tutte le feste al tempio". There is some pre-echo on the disc and an odd orchestral balance in the *stretto* section of "Addio del passato", but these are not matters of great moment in view of the pleasure given by the singer. A.R.

BENIAMINO GIGLI. (*a*) **La Bohème** (Puccini): "Che gelida manina" (Act 1). (*b*) **La Tosca** (Puccini): "E lucevan le stelle" (Act 3). (*c*) **Faust** (Gounod): "Salve, dimora, casta e pura (Act 3). (*d*) **Rigoletto** (Verdi): "La donna è mobile" (Act 3). **Beniamino Gigli** (tenor) with orchestra conducted by **Eugene Goossens** (*a* and *c*) and **Members of La Scala Orchestra** conducted by **Franco Ghione** (*b* and *d*). H.M.V. 7ER5081 (7 in., 18s. 1d.).

If only Gigli could have sung his Puccini and Gounod arias throughout as artistically as he does sing a phrase here and there—notably the opening phrases of the *Bohème* and *Faust* arias—what a much finer disc this would have been. The slurs and exaggerations in "Che gelida manina", the lack of any interior feeling in "Salve dimora" are to be regretted. He is at his best—and that is indeed very good—in "La donna è mobile", in which he respects the composer's intentions and realises them, and in which he conveys the amorality of the Duke very well. He shows, here, how well he could act with his voice.

Uncritical admirers of the artist will devour this disc for its vocal thrills: for the fact that Gigli is singing will be all that matters. It would have been helpful to have been given the date of the recording of each excerpt. The reproduction is excellent. A.R.

FESTIVAL OF GERMAN OPERA. Die Entführung aus dem Serail (Mozart): Overture. **Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra** conducted by **Fritz Lehmann. Die Zauberflöte** (Mozart): "In diesen heil'gen Hallen". **Josef Greindl** (bass), **Radio Symphony Orchestra of Berlin** conducted by **Ferenc Fricsay. Der Freischütz** (Weber): "Einst träumte meiner sel'gen Base". **Rita Streich** (soprano), **Radio Symphony Orchestra of Berlin** conducted by **Ferdinand Leitner. Undine** (Lortzing): "Nun ist's vollbracht". **Anny Schlemm** (soprano), **Hans Braun** (baritone), **Bamberg Symphony Orchestra** conducted by **Victor Reinshagen. Der Fliegende Holländer** (Wagner): "Mit Gewitter und Sturm". **Ernst Häfliger** (tenor), **Radio Symphony Orchestra of Berlin** conducted by **Ferenc Fricsay. Der Evangelimann** (Kienzl): "Selig sind, die Verfolgung leiden". **Lorenz Fehenberger** (tenor), **Herta Töpper** (soprano), **Bamberg Symphony Orchestra** conducted by **Victor Reinshagen. Die tote Stadt** (Korngold): "Glück, das mir verblieb". **Annelies Kupper** (soprano), **Lorenz Fehenberger** (tenor), **Bamberg Symphony Orchestra** conducted by **Victor Reinshagen. Der Rosenkavalier** (R. Strauss): Waltzes from Act 3. **Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra** conducted by **Eugen Jochum.** D.G.G. DGM19015 (12 in., 41s. 9d.).

All but three of the pieces in the above list have been issued before and very favourably commented on by our reviewers, so that I need deal only with the new material except to note that Ernst Hafliger, a tenor whom I admire, merely makes a feint at the top B flat in the Steersman's Song, whereas it needs good solid tone as the orchestral part boils up under it.

The new material is very welcome. *Undine* was Lortzing's attempt at a "grand, lyric, romantic opera", the theme (based on the old Melusine saga) being concerned with supernatural beings and redemption through love. The well-performed excerpt recorded is the eighth and last scene in the Third Act, a duet between Kühleborn (a "water-prince"), Undine and the water-sprites, in which she laments her lost human love and returns to her watery home as the chorus sing a lovely "swan song", in which she joins. As it ends with the refrain (unaccompanied) "O come again", dying away, Undine, Kühleborn, and the water-sprites sink into the lake over which the full moon shines, the orchestra having a short postlude. In the scene recorded from Kienzl's once very popular opera *Der Evangelimann*, the wandering preacher, Matthias, speaks of the Beatitudes to his brother's children, who repeat some of them after him. This touching scene is made all the more poignant because he had been unjustly imprisoned at the instigation of his brother. Lorenz Fehenberger sings his part with great tenderness and beauty of tone, the children sweetly respond, and Hertha Töpper makes her artistry felt in the phrase given her. I found the excerpt most moving.

Korngold's *Die Tote Stadt* (The Dead City) is, I suppose, synthetic music but Marietta's Lute Song in which Fehenberger is joined by Annelies Kupper (singing here with steady tone), makes so ravishing an effect that it suspends judgment. One just wallows in these sensuous strains. I played it three times running and recalled the lovely Lehmann-Tauber 78 disc which, alas, I no longer possess. This performance, however, is very good. All in all, this is a plumcake of a disc, rich and satisfying. I greatly enjoyed it. A.R.

MILIZA KORJUS. (*a*) **Il Barbiere di Siviglia** (Rossini): "Una voce poco fà" (Act 1). (*b*) **Rigoletto** (Verdi): "Teurer Name (Act 1). (*c*) **Lucia di Lammermoor** (Donizetti): "Ohimè! sorge il tremendo fantasma"; "Ardon gl'incensi" (Act 2). **Miliza Korjus** (soprano). **Berlin State Opera Orchestra** conducted by **Edmund Nick** (*a* and *b*) and **Bruno Seidler-Winkler** (*c*). H.M.V. 7EP7044 (7 in., 12s. 10½d.).

Miliza Korjus moves with ease in the higher, or highest, regions of her voice and her tone is remarkably steady and pure—except for an ugly note at the end of the Mad Scene from *Lucia*. This she sings with more feeling than in "Caro nome" (or rather "Teurer name". How I detest opera in translation!). Some of her florid phrases sound a bit skittish; this may be in place in the *Lucia* aria, but less so in "Una voce poco fà". One is, perhaps, too conscious of the mechanics of this singer's art, though one respects her skill. A.R.

HISTORICAL RECORDS

BEETHOVEN. Sonatas for Violin and Piano: No. 1 in D major, Op. 12, No. 1 (*a*); No. 2 in A major, Op. 12, No. 2 (*b*) (COLH6); No. 3 in E flat major, Op. 12, No. 3 (*c*); No. 4 in A minor, Op. 23 (*d*) (COLH7). **Fritz Kreisler** (violin), **Franz Rupp** (piano). H.M.V. COLH6-7 (two 12 in., 41s. 8½d. each). Recording dates (*a* and *b*) April, 1935; (*c* and *d*) April, 1935, and February, 1936.

These are the first two of a series of five records in which the Beethoven Violin Sonata Society albums gain a new lease of life. The sonatas were recorded in London in April 1935; the Pathé-Marconi engineers have made a wonderful job of revivifying the sound. Fears that the piano might prove too much subordinated to the violin are soon allayed—except at the beginning of the A major Sonata, where the violin accompaniment is certainly too prominent against the piano's theme. But even in life, it is

hard enough to balance the forces equably in these duos ; and a similar problem at the beginning of the E flat Sonata is successfully solved. As for the recorded tone, it is excellent, and no reasonable person need hesitate over the records on that score.

Leaving " history " out of it, then, we can compare these discs with the newest the catalogues may offer—and there is no shortage of alternatives. But Kreisler would certainly be my first choice. He always hits on exactly the exact tempo for a movement, the one that sounds natural and right. His handling of phrases is beautifully poised. Slow movements have a serene classical grace. In the Andante scherzoso of the A minor Sonata, his rhythm is wonderfully buoyant and phrases are deftly turned. So they are—to mention just one other passage which affords particular pleasure—in the opening of the D major's Finale. Rupp is more than a mere accompanist. His phrasing takes its colour and shapeliness from the violinist's ; it is beautifully clean, sensitive, and indeed eloquent. A.P.

GIUSEPPE DE LUCA. La Favorita : " A tanto amor " (Donizetti). **Il Trovatore :** " Il balen " (Verdi). **Don Pasquale :** " Cheti, cheti immantinente " (Donizetti) (with Feruccio Corradetti). Belcantodisc EB2 (8 in., 45 r.p.m., 16s. 6½d.).

FELIA LITVINNE. L'Africaine : Air du Sommeil (Meyerbeer). **Le Cid :** " Pleurez, mes yeux " (Massenet).

VICTOR MAUREL. Mandolinata (Paladihle). **Le Rondel de l'Adieu** (De Lara). Belacantodisc EB3 (8 in., 45 r.p.m., 16s. 6½d.).

LEON ESCALAIS. Jérusalem : " Je veux encore entendre " (Verdi). **William Tell :** " Asile héréditaire " (Rossini). **Le Mage :** " Ah ! parais " (Massenet). **La Juive :** " Dieu m'éclaire " (Halévy). Belcantodisc EB4 (8 in., 45 r.p.m., 16s. 6½d.).

This admirable Belcantodisc series (obtainable from Fonodisc, 13 Gardner Road, Prestwich, near Manchester) almost warrants the restarting of the "Collectors' Corner" section in these pages ; but now there is this difference, that we can all become collectors, and need only lay out shillings to obtain performances that until recently would have cost us as many, or more, guineas.

EB2 seems to me to offer one of the best ways of spending sixteen shillings that can be imagined. The *Don Pasquale* duet is the most stunning comic turn. Under it all lies the secure musical basis of two wonderfully accomplished baritone singers ; between the phrases, and during one another's, De Luca and Corradetti drop in interjections, expostulations ; " Ma non ho capito ", Don Pasquale (Corradetti) says, early on. At the change to 12/8, Malatesta's bright idea strikes him. " O ", he sings, in the tone that Archimedes might have used, and before he can begin on " L'ho trovato ", Pasquale slips in " Cosa c'è ? ". It is all done in the lightest, wittiest and most delightful way. There is a delirious moment in the page which appears as a string of unison C semiquavers, when one voice rises while the other falls, on crossing slopes. At the end there is naturalistic laughter perfectly chorded and perfectly timed. It is surely not possible to play through this record without wanting at once to go back for a *bis* . . . and a *ter* ! The sound is as clear and alive as that of a 1906 Fonotipia should be. The pitch is slightly low.

This duet is a transfer from two Fonotipia sides. On the other side of the new disc we can enjoy, in a calmer state of mind, the voice of the young De Luca. There is a little more metal in the tone, and he is not yet the finished singer that we know from the Victors that he started to make eleven years later, in 1917 (his recording career extended from 1903 to 1949). Yet already, how different from anything we hear now, even from our most admired baritones. Play any modern " Il balen " after De Luca's, and the art of phrasing seems to have been lost. These are both performances that grow on one very much. The ring of noble reproof in " A tanto amor " is stirring. The last note of " Il balen " is uncertain. The sound is good, and the pitch correct.

With EB3 we reach the first of Belcantodisc's non-Fonotipia transfers ; the Litvinne side is taken from two Odéons de Luxe recorded in Paris in 1907. The records of this great soprano (1860-1936) are excessively rare ; hitherto I have heard only some of the Cortot-accompanied G. & T.s, which were disappointing, and gave little idea of the " flame-like " character for which her singing was admired. But from this new record—especially on second or third playing—one begins to understand the reasons for her greatness. The superb technique, both in cantilena and in brilliant and accurate bursts of florid singing, culminating in a fine trill (in the Meyerbeer aria), is readily apparent. The tone is wonderfully steady, a controlled, gleaming stream. There is strong emotion in the phrasing. The Maurel ballads on the other side, from 1905 Fonotipias, are of slighter general interest. One admires the brio with which the baritone tosses off " Ha ! ha ! " in *Mandolinata*. *Le Rondel de l'Adieu* is a sentimental song in which the tone sounds a little cavernous.

Léon Escalais (1859 - 1940) is the "trumpet-toned French tenor with wonderfully brilliant high notes and a fearless technique" mentioned by Desmond Shawe-Taylor last September as the outstanding performer in the first of the *Famous Records of the Past* series. In France there is an Odéon LP (ODX145) which contains fourteen of his twenty-nine Fonotipia recordings, made in 1905-6, listed in Bauer. The four titles in the Belcantodisc do not offer an example of Escalais' "solid trill", but, with Fonotipical brilliance and immediacy, they otherwise present a vivid picture of this wonderfully exciting artist. *Jérusalem* is the 1847 Paris reworking of *I Lombardi*, which won sufficient currency in its own right to be taken back to La Scala. Escalais was not the creator of Zarastra, in *Le Mage* (1891), though his wife, the soprano Célestine-Marie Lureau, was in the original cast. Arnold, in *Tell*, was his début-role (at the Opéra in 1883, the year of his graduation from the Paris Conservatoire). " Dieu, m'éclaire ", from *La Juive*, is a faintly absurd little square-cut tune which goes on running in the mind with an odd persistency.

One's first impression of Escalais is probably simple wonder at and admiration of his shining, forward high notes. Then one realises that he is a fastidious artist : that the leap to the high G on the penultimate syllable of " héréditaire " is not a mere show-off, but also gives an heroic ring to what might otherwise be a slightly sentimental air for the valiant Arnold. Escalais' delivery of words is excellent, and his phrasing vigorous, sensitive and alive. Not owning any originals, I can offer no opinion on the transfers except to say that they sound very well. The only possible blemish is a slight fogginess on the two low Fs in the *Tell* aria. There is also a slight hint of wear under the high C at the close of this side, but it is of that harmless kind which does not " get into " the voice.

Labels and sleeves still have a deplorable spatter of misprints. Listeners should try to get hold of at least the words of the arias. I understand that Belcantodisc are contemplating a booklet of texts and translations to accompany the series (whoever tries to transcribe what De Luca and Corradetti actually say during the *Don Pasquale* duet will have his work cut out). Polythene inner sleeves are a welcome innovation.

A.P.

CLASSICAL REISSUES

Vocal

" NORMA "

On 33CX1489 Columbia have collected " Highlights from *Norma* ". It is in fact **Callas's** record ; and since the tenor (Filippeschi) and bass (Rossi-Lemeni) were hardly the strong points of the set, the selection will surely please (though Stignani-lovers will regret the omission of Adalgisa's accompanied recitative, " Sgombra è la sacra selva "). We plunge straight into Mme Callas's faulty but fascinating "Casta diva" (in F), shorn not only of recitative but also of orchestral prelude (since the playing-time is only just short of 30 minutes, objections must be silenced). The prima donna shows her thrilling way with recitative in the link to " Ah ! bello a me ritorno ", and sings the cabaletta stunningly. Then we go to the first Norma/Adalgisa duet, introduced by " Oh rimembranza "—rather a sudden start. After this there is a very brief cut during which Pollione comes on, and we pick up a page before the start

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COLUMBIA SEL1512 (EP)

of the trio, at " Oh, non tremare . . . per lei ". This goes on to the end of the act, including rather a free-for-all stretta. Whatever Adalgisa may have thought, Pollione's tones scarcely strike us as "dolci qual arpa armonica".

The other side offers the recitative scena, "Dormono entrambi" (without the prelude), in which Norma, dagger in hand, contemplates her children ; then there is a cut to "Mira, o Norma" and its cabaletta, both transposed down a full tone into E flat. The beautifully written orchestral introduction to " In mia man ", I am glad to say, is left in, and Callas charges her part in this duet with tremendous dramatic feeling. " Qual cor tradisti ", alas, is missing: we go into the finale at the chorus's " Norma ! deh ! Norma ! scolpati ! ", three pages before " Deh ! non volerli vittime ". It may not be quite the selection one would have made oneself, but it gives a very good idea of Callas's famous performance. What it cannot do justice to is the beautiful construction and well-planned proportions of Bellini's noble opera.

Decca EPs

This month Decca have come out with a first release of sixteen classical EPs, all of opera. One of them, a coupling of scenes from *Norma* and *Lucia di Lammermoor*, sung by Mario del Monaco, is reviewed in the previous pages ; one is orchestral ; the other fourteen are all extracts from Decca complete opera recordings. The series prefix is CEP ; the label is dark green ; the cost is 15s. 3½d., the same as for Philips and Nixa EPs, nearly three shillings less than the corresponding E.M.I. product. The records come in coloured sleeves, protected by polythene inner containers and have sleeve-notes setting the excerpts in context. On the whole, the extracts are well-chosen, and well " trimmed ". In terms of minutes per side, they represent good EP value, generally running for well over 8 minutes. The recorded quality can be given blanket approval: even the earlier recordings, which were a little sibilant in their first issues (the *Bohème*, for example), have been rounded in these 45 transfers.

Renata Tebaldi stars on seven of the records. *Tosca* (CEP501) has one of the more curiously chosen programmes. Side 1 opens with Scarpia's Holmesian pronouncement (in English, " 'Tis clear as daylight ; the provisions of the Sacristan were devoured by Angelotti ") just before Tosca's second entrance, and ends with her weeping exit, before " Tre sbirri ". Side 2 is the heart of the other scene between the soprano and the baritone, starting at " Salvatelo . . . Io ? Voi ! ", and closing with " Vissi d'arte ". Tebaldi is in full round voice, though sometimes I feel she opens out so generously as to disturb the shapeliness of a phrase. Some uneasiness of pitch at the end of the aria may lie in the record. Enzo Mascherini is an able enough Scarpia.

In the long winter evenings be
'Free as Air'
with songs from this show on
PARLOPHONE GEP8022 (EP)

Butterfly (CEP503) opens with the second part of the conversation between Sharpless (Inghilleri) and Pinkerton (Campora), at " Ed è bella la sposa ? ", goes on through " Amore o grillo " (Pinkerton's behaviour hardly was cricket, though) to the beautifully spacious Entrance of Butterfly. Side 2 is " Butterfly's Triumph " (" Il canone del porto ") and the Flower Duet, with Nell Rankin an excellent Suzuki. *La Bohème* (CEP512) holds " Mi chiamano Mimì ", Musetta's Waltz Song (Hilde Güden) in its full ensemble context, and the Addio going straight on to the Quartet, " Addio dolce svegliare ". The most lovely singing of all is to be heard in the beautifully realised cantilena of the recitative to " Tacea la notte " (" Come d'aurato sogno ", etc.). The cavatina itself is beautifully done too, though here and there a little too open perhaps ; in " Di tal amor " the voice is not quite flexible enough, though more so than you might expect. The other side of this *Trovatore* disc (CEP504) is not, as one might expect, " D'amor sul ali rosee ", but, the trio that follows on " Di tal amor ", with Del Monaco's " Deserto sulla terra ", and Savarese as Di Luna. May I put in a plea here for an EP with the " D'amor . . . Miserere . . . Tu vedrai che amore in terra" sequence: Tebaldi is the only soprano to have recorded the last, and at present we must buy a whole 12-inch record to get it.

Another excellent EP is CEP502, from *La Forza del Destino*: " Son giunta . . . Madre, pietosa Vergine ", with the off-stage chorus as well, and " La Vergine degli angeli " (Siepi as the Father Guardian), in which Tebaldi's voice floats over the ensemble in the most lovely way. From *Aida* (CEP506) we have the duets with Amneris (Stignani) and with Amonasro (Aldo Protti). The *Traviata* disc (CEP511) is taken from the first act (which is less good than the later ones, in this recording) : the Brindisi (Gianni Poggi as Alfredo), " Un dì felice ", and " E strano . . . Ah ! fors' è lui . . . Follie ! follie ! ", a distressing burst of coarse laughter, and then " Sempre libera ", in G. The singing is actually more accomplished than memory of the complete set predicted ; Tebaldi sings with feeling, and slips her voice into the florid music with a certain dexterity ; and Poggi attempts to be shapely.

Mario del Monaco, of course, also makes his appearance in this release, with four discs. He appears most favourably in *Otello* (CEP514) : a stirring " Ora e per sempre ", then " Era la notte " sung fairly by Aldo Protti, and going straight on to " Sì, pel ciel " ; on the other side " Dio mi potevi ", which is done with some expression, and a " Niun mi tema ", of which the tenor makes rather heavy going. A *Rigoletto* disc (CEP513) is wrongly labelled. Aldo Protti sings a fairly routined " Pari siamo ", which continues with the first part of the duet with Gilda (" Figlia ! Mio padre ! . . . Deh non parlare al misero ") but stops *before* " Ah ! veglia, o donna ", promised by the label. The other side has del Monaco's solid " Questa o quella " and Güden's attractively vocalised " Caro nome "—ending with the high note, not the trill. And so to *Cav* and *Pag*, all adequate performances, but not really distinguished enough to compete with EPs already available. CEP509, from *Cav*, has the Siciliana, Easter Hymn (Elena Nicolai), starting very early, the Santuzza/Alfio conversation (" Ah, il Signor vi manda ", with Protti as Alfio), and " Viva il vino ". CEP510, from *Pag*, offers Clara Petrella in the Ballatella, " Vesti la giubba ", " Un tal gioco " and from " No ! Pagliaccio non son " to the end of the opera.

From the Decca *Figaro* under Kleiber we have Siepi's smooth, amiable " Non più andrai ", Suzanne Danco's prettily sung " Voi che sapete ", and Lisa della Casa's coolly vocalised " Dove sono " (CEP507). The Opéra-Comique's *Carmen* (CEP515) yields the Micaëla/José duet (Janine Micheau/Libero de Luca), the Séguidille and second part of the Card Scene (Suzanne Juyol), and Toreador's Song (Julien Giovanetti), all of which falls very agreeably on the ears after the British *Carmens* we have had to hear lately. Juyol's attack on the phrases of the Card Scene is excellent. CEP505 has lively performances of " Se il mio nome " (Alvinio Misciano), " Dunque io son " (Simionato/Bastianini) and " All' idea di quel metallo " from *Il Barbiere.*

*

Philips have revived the famous recording of the Closing Scene from *Salome* made by **Ljuba Welitsch,** with the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra under Fritz Reiner (ABE10025), which used to be available on a 10-inch Columbia LP backed by Tatiana's Letter Scene. It was never a good recording, but the great soprano's wonderful shining notes and phrases and her extraordinarily gripping interpretation make this a disc which one cannot forgo, even though the orchestra is far from ideally clear or spacious. The bass line is missing in the bar " Du hättest mich geliebt ": this is where one of the 78 r.p.m. sides started. Will Philips, please, now make the Tatiana scene available again too ?

*

I suppose that the lower price and longer playing-time of the Decca EPs will put E.M.I. on their mettle. One side of Columbia SEL1570, three Schubert songs sung by **Elisabeth Schwarzkopf** and accompanied by **Edwin Fischer,** lasts only 4′ 40″, easy matter for a 12-inch side in the old days—and Mysz-Gmeiner needed only a 10-inch for this particular song, *Die junge Nonne.* Mme Schwarzkopf sings it with vigour and passion, so much indeed as to suggest that past tenses in which she describes the storms that raged in her own breast scarcely seem to be justified. A possible though not the usual interpretation. The tempo slackens through the song, which is surely not right. On the other side (which lasts just over 6 minutes) we have *Nähe des Geliebten,* a miracle of a strophic song seeming actually to gain in expressiveness by the repetition of the melody (and very well sung), and *Wehmuth,* well suited by Mme Schwarzkopf's emotional performance.

SEL1569, from the Columbia *Tosca*, starts nine pages of vocal score earlier than Decca CEP501 reviewed above, at Scarpia's "A stupid blunder, that gunshot from the fortress", turns over during his conversation with Tosca, and continues to the end of the act with "Tre sbirri" and the Te Deum. This is much more gripping than the Decca record; **Callas** and **Gobbi** are both in splendid form, De Sabata's conducting is thrilling, and the recording is deep and spacious.

Antonietta Stella included some of the rather less familiar Puccini arias in her recent recital, from *Schicchi* and *Angelica* and *Faniculla*, but H.M.V. 7ER5080 collects "Vissi d'arte", the Death of Butterfly, Liù's "Tu che di gel" and—perhaps less common—Manon Lescaut's "Sola, perduta, abbandonata". This last shows the promising young soprano at her most attractive. The others will perhaps come in useful later when charting Miss Stella's career towards, we trust, a more accomplished art. **Joan Hammond,** on H.M.V. 7ER5083, sings Aida's two arias so well that one wonders how Covent Garden can have failed to bill her in their new production of the opera (they have asked Miss Brouwenstijn to take over the role after Amy Shuard). Miss Hammond sounds just a little over-excited in some phrases of "O patria mia", but she floats the long phrases with an excellent sense of shaping and tonal grading, far more stylishly than some of the Italian Aidas who are praised today. The covers of these four records have photographs of the performers and notes, but the typographical lay-out is undistinguished—and how much more valuable to have given the words, with literal translations. A.P.

Orchestral

H.M.V. 7EP7046 is described as "Excerpts from *Sylvia* (No. 1)", and so presumably some more excerpts are on the way. This opening instalment contains the first three pieces in the ballet excluding the prelude, beautifully played by the **Philharmonia** under **Robert Irving;** and beautifully scored and beautifully written for that matter. Aminta's *leit-motiv*, the cool flute solo that opens the piece called "Le Berger", is delectable music, and one wishes Delibes could have risen to these heights more often. The third and last item is the famous "Les Chasseresses" with its brash horn calls that carry just the faintest echo of "The Ride of the Valkyries". A most attractive disc. The original, by the way, was a two-sided LP that appeared in November, 1955. R.F.

Georg Solti's performance with the **London Symphony Orchestra** of the Mozart Symphony No. 25 in G minor (previously coupled with the *Prague*) is reissued now in MP form on Decca LW 5301. The performance is a vigorous one, well in keeping with the music; and to that limited extent loses the less by its quality of recording, which is rather harsh.

So, in a small degree, is that of Decca LW5298; but this, like the other, has plenty of virtues to compensate for the small defect. The music is extracted from the full two-disc set of *The Sleeping Beauty*, and consists of those numbers used by Diaghilev in 1922 for his *Aurora's Wedding* sequence. Some of the best of all the Tchaikovsky ballet music is here, played with great vitality by the **Paris Conservatoire Orchestra** under **Anatole Fistoulari.** Flute and clarinet, especially, take honours, even if the oboe does not; and those who share my distress at the present situation will be glad to know that the music was recorded before French brass-playing had gone seriously to seed.

Nothing, however, has even begun to go to seed in LW5304; this offers Decca's recording at its near-best in two Rimsky-Korsakov overtures, *May Night* and *Russian Easter Festival*, a singularly non-festive piece. The performances of both overtures, however, are first-class, given by **Ansermet** and the **Suisse Romande** orchestra.

Similar happy qualities invest a Decca 45, CEP508. Here again the recording is very good, effectively projecting vital performances by the **London Symphony Orchestra** under **Pierino Gamba** of Verdi's blood-and-thunder *Sicilian Vespers* overture and Ponchielli's *Dance of the Hours*.

An Archive 45, EPA37039, is of quite outstanding quality. It is of Bach's Third *Brandenburg*, in the performance by **August Wenzinger** and members of the **Schola Cantorum Basiliensis** familiar from their complete set of the concertos. The energetic strings are marvellously well balanced, the harpsichord contributes a short extemporisation (or music to that effect) between movements in superlatively convincing style, and the recording could scarcely be bettered. M.M.

Supraphon's record (LPM59) of the Oboe Concerto by Krommer-Kramář (known in this household as Kommer-Karrier) is again available. Actually, his name was merely Kramář, of which Krommer is apparently the German form—an odd thing to hitch them together. He lived from 1759 to 1831 and is described by Scholes as a "wholesale composer" of music (in that disparaging way he has with unknown but prolific composers). If more of it is as delightful as this, then let us have more. As M.M. pointed out in his review of October, 1953, the orchestral recording is no great shakes but the oboe playing by **Frantisek Hanták** is first-rate. Anyway, in music of this sort and as attractive as this, the orchestra's part is of minor interest. The new copy has an excellent surface. For only 22 minutes' music it is a rather expensive 10-incher, but its novelty makes it still highly recommendable **(Bruno Radio S.O.).**

Bartók's suite from his Ballet *The Miraculous Mandarin* coupled with Kodály's variations *The Peacock*, originally put out by Oriole, reappear on the Mercury label (MRL2541) performed by **Antal Dorati** and the **Chicago S.O.** The recording of the Bartók is brilliant but lacks fullness. It is the sort that is either too loud or too soft—one moment you think of the neighbours and rush to turn it down, the next it is too soft. The Kodály side is richer in sound and altogether easier to manage. But this is the only recording of the remarkable Bartók score and is valuable for that reason. T.H.

Instrumental

A Philips disc (ABL3196) contains three of Bach's biggest organ works recorded by **Albert Schweitzer** at Gunsbach in Alsace. When A.R. reviewed this record in November, 1953—it was then labelled Col. 33CX1074—he quoted Schweitzer's remark: "the more we play Bach's organ works, the slower we take the tempi". Schweitzer's admirers accept this as axiomatic, and gladly forgive him the fluffs that a lifetime devoted to a hundred and one other things make inevitable when he returns to the organ. On one side is the big C major Toccata, Adagio and Fugue; on the other the big A minor fugue without its prelude, and the great Fantasia and Fugue in G minor. R.F.

REVIEWER'S NOTES

T.H. writes:

In the issue of last April I reviewed a record of Mozart's Violin Concerto, K271a, conducted by Paumgartner in which I queried the alteration in the slow movement of *pizzicato* for the strings (as indicated in the miniature score) to *arco*. Dr. Paumgartner has since most kindly written about this matter. He points out that the original manuscript of this work is lost (though it is certainly by Mozart) and that the present edition rests on a copy made from the autograph by the French violinist Eugene Sauzay: but that this has without doubt been much altered to suit French taste of the time (1835), in the orchestral parts and even more in the solo line, to the extent that the precise original cannot be established. Dr. Paumgartner says that the *pizzicato* at the start of the slow movement is a type of accompaniment never used by Mozart and it therefore seemed reasonable to get nearer to the original at least in this respect, even if it were not possible to eliminate other arbitrary changes made by the unknown editor.

As Dr. Paumgartner ends by saying—"we can only hope that the autograph will turn up again one fine day: till this doubtful time we must enjoy the countless beauties of this concerto as we have it now".

St. Cecilia's Festival

Under the patronage of Her Majesty the Queen, the St. Cecilia's Festival for 1957 will take place in three parts. On November 22nd there will be the usual Festival service at St. Sepulchre's, Holborn Viaduct, on the 26th will follow the Royal Concert at the Festival Hall, and finally on the 28th the Festival Dinner at the Savoy. Further details may be obtained from the Secretary, Musicians' Benevolent Fund, 7 Carlos Place London, W.1.

NIGHTS AT THE ROUND TABLE

By W. A. CHISLETT

"Gypsy" by the **Hollywood Bowl Symphony Orchestra** under **Carmen Dragon** pleases me very much more than many records of similar music played by authentic or so-called gypsy bands (Capitol P8342). The recording is of fine quality and the playing is highly virtuosic, in particular the massed strings play harmonics like a group of soloists. The compositions include *Slavonic Dances Nos.* 8 *and* 10 and *Songs my Mother taught me*, all by Dvořák, the Brahms' *Hungarian Dance No.* 6, Sarasate's *Zigeunerweisen*, *Hora Staccato* and the two Russian folk tunes *Two Guitars* and *Dark Eyes*.

"Love Dreams" played by **Alfred Newman and his Orchestra** on Brunswick LAT8160 is also good in its way though there is rather too much in one mood and not all the orchestral arrangements commend themselves to me. The playing is no more than appropriately sentimental. The titles include Liszt's *Liebestraume No.* 3, Kreisler's *The old refrain* and *Liebeslied*, the first movement from Beethoven's *Moonlight Sonata* (the sleeve title suggests that the whole sonata is played but it isn't) and *Für Elise*, Chopin's *Nocturne in E flat, Op.* 9, *No.* 2 and *Prelude in E minor, Op.* 28, *No.* 4 and Debussy's *Rêverie* and *Clair de lune*.

On Philips SBR6288 in "Vienna Promenade Concert No. 1" the **Vienna Symphony Orchestra** under **Salmhofer** introduces us to a number of pieces by Johann Strauss II that have not hitherto been recorded. The complete list of titles is *Persian March, Op.* 289, *New Pizzicato Polka, Op.* 449, *Banditengalopp, Op.* 378, *Annen Polka, Op.* 117, *Leichtes Blut, Op.* 319, *Im Krapfenwaldl, Op.* 336, *Tik-Tak Polka, Op.* 365, *Queen's Gavotte, Op.* 391 and *Radetzky March, Op.* 228 (by Johann I, of course). This is a "must" for all Strauss fans.

Not quite so exciting but good none the less are the Intermezzo from *A Thousand and One Nights* and the Overture to *The Gipsy Baron* played by the **North-Western German Philharmonic Orchestra** under **Schüchter** on Parlophone GEP8631. It is the former which makes this little disc desirable for the overture is already available in rather more subtle performances.

Eric Coates conducts his own *Impression of a Princess* and *High Flight March* on H.M.V. POP386. Both pieces are thoroughly typical of their composer but he has written better things in both veins.

Popular Intermezzi from *Cavalleria Rusticana*, *Manon Lescaut* and *The Jewels of the Madonna* (both of them) are conveniently coupled on Philips NBE11061 in good performances by the **Robin Hood Dell Orchestra of Philadelphia** under **Mitropoulos.** The harp, and, in a lesser degree, pizzicato strings are rather boomily recorded.

The same orchestra under **Morton Gould** plays four of the compositions of Lecuona which are so popular just now. They are *Andalusia, La Comparsa, Malaguena* and *Jungle Drums*. The last is trite and conventional but the others fully deserve their popularity.

This is the best month for band records that we have had for a long time. The high quality of the **Eastman Symphonic Wind Ensemble** under **Frederick Fennell** has been mentioned by colleagues as well as by myself. Their new record, Mercury MRL2567, is every bit as good as its predecessors both in performance and recording, and higher praise is hardly possible. It is a band of around sixty instrumentalists which is large by English but not, it seems, by American standards for a military band. One side is devoted to six Sousa marches and the other contains a number of less familiar American marches and our own K. J. Alford's *Colonel Bogey*. The last mentioned is not given quite the bite that the composer gave it when conducting his Marines' band in pre-war days and one or two of the Sousa marches are held up slightly in places for an effect which I feel does not quite come off. Also I should have liked a little less percussion in *Barnum and Bailey's Favourite*, the better to appreciate the virtuosity of the rest of the band but these are all small points in a first-class issue.

The **American Symphonic Band of the Air** (about 70 performers) under **Dr. W. D. Revelli** is another magnificent organisation and is new to me. "Band Encores" is the title of their record (Brunswick LAT8207). There are thirteen items including three movements from Herman's *Ballet for Young Americans*, Charpentier's brilliant *Ballet of Pleasure*, the charming *Valzer Campestre* of Marinuzzi, *On the Esplanade*, which introduces many apt short quotations, and *School Musician March*, all of which I like very much and "A Romantic Theme" from Hanson's *Symphony No.* 2 which I do not like at all in this arrangement. The playing is magnificent, almost incredibly virtuosic in places, and the recording is sympathetic.

After these two discs the **Madrid Bullfight Band** sounds as tame as a pet Jersey cow, and neither piece (*Here comes the Bull* and *Here comes the Matador*) is improved by the "effects", shouting, applauding and the like, at any rate so far as English ears are concerned.

The **Central Band of the R.A.F.** under **Wing Commander A. E. Sims** is excellent (a smaller band than the two American ones) in Hubert Bath's excellent march *Out of the Blue* but the whining of aeroplanes which introduces *High Flight* is a miscalculation for recording purposes. What will do for and can even be highly effective in a live performance or broadcast can become tiresome in a record to be heard again and again (Decca F10932). I prefer the composer's own version, mentioned above.

A group of Beltona records of Irish interest are noteworthy for the admirable and entertaining notes written by Richard Hayward. **Bridie Gallagher's** songs on LBE17, which takes its name from the first of them, "The Girl from Donegal" are sentimental ballads rather than folk songs in the usually accepted sense although the authorship of many is unknown. In both voice and style she is perfectly suited to songs of this kind.

Gerard Campbell in "The Wandering Minstrel" (LBE16) mixes folk songs and ballads, mostly but not all of Irish origin. Like Mr. Hayward I feel that some of them lose something of their authenticity by the guitar accompaniments, but the result is remarkably agreeable and I look forward to further discs from this young singer.

The **Gallowglass Ceili Band** is almost a household name by now. It is a family affair in the main which started in the little town of Naas, Co. Kildare, was popular from its inception and set the seal on its success by winning the coveted Hohner Challenge Shield three years running, in 1953, 1954 and 1955. Beltona LBE15 contains sixteen groups of dances many of which can be had also in EP form on IEP51-54.

Another Beltona LP (LBA18) has 19 Scottish songs sung by **Niven Miller**. Born in Fifeshire 27 years ago, Mr. Miller was by scholarships enabled to study in Milan, Geneva and Vienna as well as London. He has sung in opera at Glyndebourne and under Sir Thomas Beecham. The sleeve note makes much of his connecting the songs by a few friendly words (and chuckles) but in a record surely this is a mistake however agreeable it may be at a recital. These things do not bear constant repetition whereas the songs do. It is particularly interesting to hear the true version of *Loch Lomond*.

"Hebridean Songs, Vol. 2" is the title of **Father Sydney MacEwan's** new record (Philips NBE11057) and it is first-class in every way including the harp accompaniments of **Maria Korchinska**.

Much as I admire **Hilde Gueden** I do not think "My Secret Heart" (the music of Ivor Novello and Noël Coward) is suited to her style at all though the voice is as lovely as ever (Decca LK4196).

Joseph Schmidt died fifteen years ago and it is good to have his art revived in four ditties on Parlophone GEP8632. He was a remarkable phenomenon. No bigger than the proverbial six penn'orth of coppers he had a voice of fine quality and great range and power. In England he is probably best remembered for his film "A Star fell from Heaven", two songs from which are included in this record.

Harry Secombe's inclusion of an operatic aria in most of his programmes is admirable but when it comes to recording eight of the best-known and most-sung arias on a long-player (Philips BBR8111) he must inevitably face comparison with the many others who have recorded the same arias and to be honest there are plenty of better versions of these songs available.

Four choral records provide very interesting contrasts. Good honest English church-choir singing is offered on Pye CEM36002 by the **Hampstead Parish Church Choir** in *Here we come a'wassailing, Good King Wenceslas, O come all ye faithful* and *The First Nowell*.

Similarly the **Don Cossack Choir** could not possibly be anything but Russian in their long-player of excerpts from *A Life for the Czar, In the Church* and *Save, O God, Your People*, both by Tchaikovsky and the latter from the finale of the "1812 Overture", *By the River Don, Cossack Marching Song* and an entertaining *Old Style Waltz* which may be old in style but is certainly not in treatment (DGG DG17096). The excerpts from *A Life for the Czar* are tremendously exciting.

The other two records are both American and are typical of two quite different styles. I have heard **Tennessee Ernie Ford** in jazz and in hymns and now he appears, with orchestra and an excellent chorus in "Spirituals" (Capitol T818). The style is sophisticated and highly personal but very effective in its individual way.

The **Roger Wagner Chorale** sings nineteen Christmas carols and hymns in lush glossy style but oh, so well (Capitol P8353).

Finally a record of highlights from the 1957 White City Searchlight Tattoo can be recommended as a desirable souvenir of this great show and no one is likely to want it for any other purpose (H.M.V. DLP1116). The technique of recording occasions such as this and outdoor performances has advanced much less in recent years than the technique of studio and concert hall recording.

Postscript.—At the last moment has arrived a twelve-inch selection from *Porgy and Bess* with **Martha Flowers, Irving Barnes, Leesa Forster, Joe Attles** and **Lorenzo Fuller** as soloists, the **Orchestre Symphonique and Chorus "Concerthall, Haarlem"** and **Lorenzo Fuller,** conductor (H.M.V. CLP1135) A first and very hurried hearing suggests that this is very good indeed.

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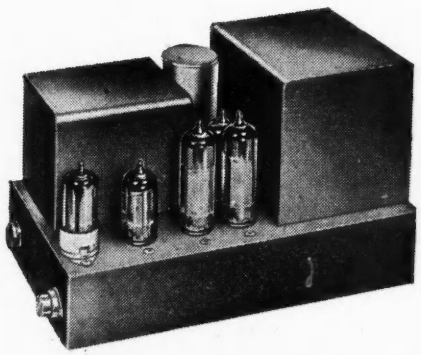

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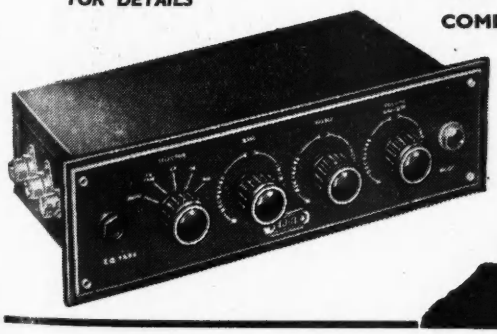

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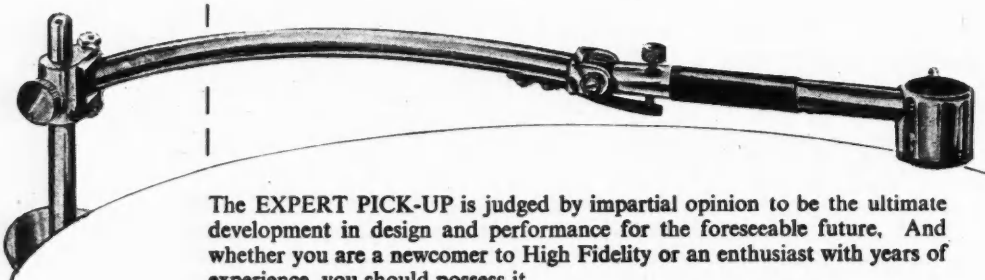

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JAZZ AND SWING

Reviewed by

CHARLES FOX, EDGAR JACKSON, OLIVER KING, ALUN MORGAN

★Louis Armstrong and his Hot Five

" The Louis Armstrong Story—Vol. 1 "

****Muskrat Ramble (Ory) (*b*); Heebie Jeebies (Atkins) (V) (*c*); Gut Bucket Blues (Armstrong) (V) (*a*); Skid-Dat-De-Dat (Lil Hardin) (V) (*e*); Yes, I'm In The Barrel (Armstrong) (*a*); Cornet Chop Suey (Armstrong) (*d*); Struttin' With Some Barbecue (Hardin) (*h*); I'm Not Rough (Armstrong) (V) (*j*); The Last Time (Ewing, Martin) (V) (*g*); Got No Blues (Hardin) (*i*); Hotter Than That (Hardin) (V) (*k*); Ory's Creole Trombone (Ory) (*f*)

(Philips 12 in. LP BBL7134—37s. 6½d.)

(*a*) to (*i*) incl.—**Armstrong** (*cornet, tpt, voc*); **Johnny Dodds** (*clt*); **Kid Ory** (*tmb, voc*); **Lil Armstrong** (*nee* Hardin) (*pno*); **Johnny St. Cyr** (*bjo*). (*a*), (*b*) 12/11/1925; (*c*), (*d*) 26/2/1926; (*e*) 16/11/1926; (*f*) 2/9/1927, (*g*) 6/9/1927; (*h*), (*i*) 9/12/1927. Chicago (Am. OKeh.)

(*j*), (*k*)—Same personnel, plus **Lonnie Johnson** (*gtr*). (*j*) 9/12/1927; (*k*) 13/12/27. Do. (Do.).

Previous issues (all deleted): (*a*) Columbia DB2978; (*a*), (*b*), (*d*) do. EP SEG7514; (*b*), (*d*) do. DB2624; (*f*), (*g*) Parlophone R2792; (*h*) do. R2829; (*i*) do. R2449; (*k*) do. R2704; all Columbia 12 in. LP 33SX1029.

These sides have all been issued before on either Columbia or Parlophone, but as they represent the first of a series of " Louis Armstrong Story " volumes it would be niggardly not to scrape up some space to mention them.

Their value as jazz classics cannot be overestimated, despite the cloudy pre-electric recording of many of them, and the traces of immaturity in Armstrong's playing. We do find in them, however, the beginnings of Louis' virtuosic style that propelled him to the top of a very competitive tree. We find, too, Ory and Dodds at their most eloquent. It is difficult to single out one track for special mention, but does anyone know of a more starkly beautiful blues than *Skid-Dat-De-Dat*? O.K.

Sleeve Note: Anonymous. Discographical details might have been more clearly displayed, but text very good.

★Count Basie and his Orchestra

" April In Paris "

****April In Paris (Vernon Duke) (*a*); Corner Pocket (Freddie Greene) (*c*); Did'n You (Frank Fosters) (*c*); Sweety Cakes (Ernie Wilkins) (*c*); Magic (Frank Wess) (*b*); Shiny Stockings (Foster) (*c*); What Am I Here For? (Ellington) (*c*); Midgets (Joe Newman) (*c*); Mambo Inn (Woodlen, Sampson, Bauza) (*c*); Dinner With Friends (Neal Hefti) (*c*)

(Columbia Clef 12 in. LP 33CX10068—41s. 8½d.)

(*a*), (*b*), (*c*)—**Basie** (*pno*); **Bill Graham, Royal** (*altos*); **Frank Foster** (*tnr*); **Frank Wess** (*tnr, flute*) **Fowlkes** (*bar*); **Culley, Reunald Jones, Thad Jones, Newman** (*tpts*); **Coker, Bill Hughes, Benny Powell** (*tmbs*); **Greene** (*gtr*); **Ed Jones** (*bass*); **Sonny Payne** (*drs*). (*a*) 8/5/1955; (*b*) August, 1955; (*c*) Autumn 1955. U.S.A. (Norman Granz.)

Previous issue: (*a*) Columbia Clef LB10022.

This LP contains about one half of Basie's current concert programme and will be familiar to those who heard the Basie band on its recent British tour. Three of the tracks are hardly worthy of the Count: *April In Paris, Mambo Inn* and *Dinner With Friends*. First mentioned, with Thad Jones' inevitable *Pop Goes The Weasel* quotation and the gimmick ending, is a crowd-pleaser pure and simple; the mambo, written by two of Machito's trumpeters, has a questionable place in a jazz library; the frantic *Dinner With Friends* is a much abbreviated version of Sonny Payne's mainly-visual display.

On the credit side, *Corner Pocket* is one of the best tracks yet recorded by the contemporary Basie personnel, and *Magic* contains the rarely heard solo voice of trombonist Bill Hughes. Ellington's *What Am I Here For?* is excellent material for the band (although this Basie version is not equal to Duke's); *Midgets* is played by a sextet comprising Newman's muted trumpet, Wess' flute and rhythm. Foster's *Did'n You* seems to have been inspired by the opening phrase of Ellington's *Squeeze Me*.

The strength of the band is in its dynamic ensemble power and its ability to swing at any tempo. None of the soloists is a match for the individualists who helped to create the character of the Basie band nearly two decades ago, but perhaps that is a criticism of jazz in general rather than of the Count in particular. A.M.

Sleeve Note: Anonymous. No recording date, but gives personnel and composers (with their Christian names) and lists main soloists. Short but fairly adequate.

★Leonard Bernstein

*****What is Jazz? (Bernstein)

(Philips 12 in. LP BBL7149—37s. 6½d.)

Bernstein (*lecturer*); various musicians recorded " live ", including: **Buster Bailey** (*clt*); **Coleman Hawkins, Ted Macero, Romeo Penque** (*tnrs*); **Buck Clayton, Miles Davis** (*tpts*); **Lawrence Brown** (*tmb*); **Bob Prince** (*vib*); **Bernstein, Nat Pierce** (*pno*); **Freddie Greene** (*gtr*); **Eddie Jones** (*bass*); **Gus Johnson** (*drs*); **Sherry Ostras** (*voc*); excerpts from various recordings (for titles see sleeve) by, *inter alia*: **Louis Armstrong, Buck Clayton, Duke Ellington, Pete Johnson, Leadbelly, Machito, Turk Murphy, Rampart Street Paraders, Bessie Smith.** 1956. U.S.A. (Am. Columbia.)

Many people have tried to explain jazz—most of them with but scant success. In this record Leonard Bernstein, well known in America as an authority on music generally, gets nearer to succeeding than probably anyone else yet has.

The record is a revised version of one of a series of talks on music of various kinds originally given by Mr. Bernstein over an American television network. Using both records and live performances to illustrate his points, he carefully takes us, by means of a simple, unassuming script, through just about the whole jazz scene—from the earliest blues and boogie woogie, through the Dixieland, Chicago and Charleston phases, to swing and bop and even on to the (as Mr. Bernstein appears to see it) impending fusion of jazz and " straight " music. He covers such jazz devices as blue notes, rhythm, syncopation and the important part that accents play in it, form (" the blues is a strictly classical form "), the usage of vibrato (the saxophonist called in to illustrate vibratoless tone after Coleman Hawkins had failed still doesn't manage to make it), solo and collective improvisation, and arrangements.

Some may not agree with some of Mr. Bernstein's contentions—for instance, that the clash on the piano of what (although Mr. Bernstein does not use the term) are in fact adjacent (coloquially called " touching ") semitones is the result of the searching for jazz quarter-tone inflections on an instrument that has no such notes.

But such criticisms are niggardly. As well as building up his mosiac lucidly, with everything (except the reference to boogie woogie) in its right sequence and given just the right emphasis, Mr. Bernstein shows a literally amazing knowledge of jazz and power to analyse it. The result is that in forty minutes he not only tells the newcomer to jazz more than he would be likely to find out about it by other means in as many months, but also points out a few things that even the most experienced jazz devotee may not fully have realised. E.J.

Sleeve Note: George Avakian. Records used are listed with names of artists and recording dates, but no personnels. This, however, would have been difficult in the space, since excerpts from a dozen records are introduced. So let us say that as a whole the note is adequate for its purpose.

★Ruby Braff

" Hustlin' And Bustlin' "

****Hustlin' And Bustlin' For Baby (Woods) (*b*); There's A Small Hotel (Richard Rodgers) (*b*); What's The Reason? (Tomlin, Hatch, Poe Grier) (*c*); 'S Wonderful (Gershwin) (*a*); I Wish I could Shimmy Like My Sister Kate (Piron) (*a*); When It's Sleepy Time Down South (L. and O. Rene, Muse) (V) (*d*); Flakey (Braff) (*c*); Shoe Shine Boy (Cahn, Chaplin) (*c*); Fine And Mellow (Billie Holiday) (*b*); Ad Lib Blues (Improvised) (*a*)

(Vogue 12 in. LP LAE12051—38s. 3d.)

(*a*)—**Braff** (*tpt*); **Edmond Hall** (*clt*); **Vic Dickenson** (*tmb*); **George Wein** (*pno*); **John Field** (*bass*); **Jo Jones** (*drs*). *Circa* Summer, 1951. Storyville Club, Boston. (Am. Storyville.)

(*b*), (*c*)—**Braff** (*tpt*); **Sam Margolis** (*tnr*); **Kenneth Kersey** (*pno*); **Milt Hinton** (*bass*); **Bobby Donaldson** (*drs*). *Circa* May, 1954. New York. (Do.)

(*d*)—**Braff** (*tpt*); **Al Drootin** (*clt, tnr*); **Margolis** (*tnr*); **Vic Dickenson** (*tmb, voc.*); **Dick Le Fave** (*tmb*); **Wein** (*pno*); **Field** (*bass*); **Buzzy Drootin** (*drs*). 9/6/1954. Boston Common, U.S.A. (Do.)

Note: (*b*) available also on Vogue EP EPV1221.

Perhaps the most distinctive feature of Ruby Braff's trumpet playing is the way it draws upon all periods of jazz, fusing many different styles. Yet the dominating influence is always easy to identify—Louis Armstrong's. Braff's indebtedness to Armstrong can be spotted on many of these tracks, but most notably in his interpretation of *Sleepy Time Down South*, always one of Louis' favourite tunes. Yet although Braff uses Armstrong phrases and cadences, his tone and ideas remain quite individual.

The 1951 session is rather disappointing, despite good solos from Vic Dickenson and Ed Hall. The tracks were recorded " live " at the Storyville Club in Boston, and as well as the ensemble-playing being messy the recording quality is very inferior. These performances are mainly of interest because they are among the earliest Ruby Braff ever recorded and show how his playing (a little less melodic in those days) has developed.

The four-star music is to be found on the tracks made, in May, 1954, with Sam Margolis, Kenneth Kersey, Milt Hinton and Bobby

Donaldson. Most satisfying of all is the exquisite *Fine And Mellow* (a blues made famous by Billie Holiday) with Braff using the mute very delicately. Sam Margolis also performs sensitively on this track; a relaxed, fluent tenor soloist, he sounds rather like Lester Young in slow numbers, and like Bud Freeman at fast tempo. E.J.

Sleeve Note: Albert McCarthy. Admirably written, with full information clearly given.

★Bobby Brookmeyer—Zoot Sims

"Whoooeee"

******The King** (Basie); **Lullaby Of The Leaves** (Young, Petkere); **I Can't Get Started** (Vernon Duke); **Snake Eyes** (Al Cohn); **Morning Fun** (Sims); **Whoooeee** (Brookmeyer); **Someone To Watch Over Me** (Gershwin); **My Old Flame** (Sam Coslow); **Box Cars** (Cohn)
(Vogue 12 in. LP LAE12053—38s. 3d.)

Sims (*tnr*); **Brookmeyer** (*valve-tmb*); **Hank Jones** (*pno*); **Bill Crow** (*bass*); **Jo Jones** (*drs*). August, 1956. New York. (Am. Storyville.)

I thought the recent Zoot Sims-Bob Brookmeyer album (Vogue LAE12047, reviewed last September) one of the best small group jazz issues of the year. This new one is even better. It combines a relaxed, flowing swing with a feeling of warmth and cheerfulness. Sims is one of the most consistent of all the post-war soloists, and even the so often doleful Brookmeyer came to life on this session. Jo Jones makes a most suitable choice of drummer, never over-loud or unduly assertive, but always the model of good taste. Bass player Red Callender said of him recently "he plays the drums as if he invented the instrument".

The material is well suited to the mood of the date. Count Basie wrote *The King* over ten years ago; Al Cohn's lively *Box Car* and *Snake Eyes* are of more recent vintage. Sims sings a chorus of *I Can't Get Started*, maybe good fun, but I'd prefer it if he stuck to his tenor. E.J.

Sleeve Note: Complete and good. It needed to be. It's by Alun Morgan!

★Sandy Brown's Jazz Band

"McJazz"

******Go Ghana** (Brown); **Scales** (Brown); **The Card** (Fairweather); **Monochrome** (Brown); **Those Blues** (Brown); **Wild Life** (Brown); **Doctor Blues, I Presume** (Brown); **Ognoliya** (Fairweather); **Saved By The Blues** (Brown)
(Nixa Jazz Today LP NJL9—35s. 10d.)

Brown (*clt*); **Al Fairweather** (*tpt*); **Jeremy French** (*tmb*); **Ian Armit** (*pno*); **W. Disley** (*gtr, bjo*); **Tim Mahn** (*bass*); **Graham Burbridge** (*drs*). 5/3/1957. London. (Pye-Nixa.)

The general sound of this band is refreshingly different. There are touches of the best aspects of the modern idiom wedded to the traditional (in the best and most literal sense) basis of steady rhythm. To examine each track as it deserves would demand more space than I can spare, but if you want your hopes for the future of British jazz raised, you can hardly do better than study this record. The originality of the tunes alone makes it worth while. The only slight fault I have to find is that in some cases the rhythm is not as relaxed as it might be. O.K.

Sleeve Note: Anonymous. Discographical details most clearly set out. Text has some rather exaggerated praise, but is otherwise informative and good.

★Dave Brubeck Quartet

"Jazz Impressions Of The U.S.A."

******Ode To A Cowboy** (*b*); **Summer Song** (*b*); **Yonder For Two** (*a*); **History Of A Boy Scout** (*a*); **Plain Song** (*b*); **Curtain Time** (*a*); **Sounds Of The Loop** (*b*); **Home At Last** (*c*). (All Brubeck).
(Philips 12 in. LP BBL7171—37s. 6½d.)

Brubeck (*pno*); **Paul Desmond** (*alto*); **Norman Bates** (*bass*); **Joe Morello** (*drs*). (*a*) 16/11/1956; (*b*) 26/11/1956; (*c*) 4/2/1957. U.S.A. (Am. Columbia).

In his sleeve note Dave Brubeck describes the original pictures which inspired these eight descriptive works. Just how successful the compositions are as pages from a musical sketch-book is really of little importance; *Cowboy*, *Summer Song*, *Plain Song* and *Home* certainly evoke the intended moods, but all eight numbers are suitable vehicles for the group.

Although recorded without an audience (*Home At Last*, a piano solo, was recorded in Brubeck's own house) the Quartet takes on a kind of fused, integrated quality previously associated only with such public concert recordings as the Oberlin and Pacific College transcriptions. One of the chief reasons is the presence of ex-Marian McPartland drummer Joe Morello, the best drummer Brubeck has yet employed. Joe is a part of the group, not just a paid human metronome answering to the whims of the leader. This is clearly a change for the better, for the previous Quartet was in great danger of becoming a two-man show. Brubeck and Desmond still dominate the proceedings, but Bates and Morello have been placed on a higher plane of significance than any other Brubeck rhythm men. (Morello plays a six-chorus solo lasting nearly four minutes on *Loop*, a hitherto unheard of occurrence on a Dave Brubeck record.) The cultivation of a group feeling is one of jazz's important factors, and Brubeck's new Quartet is a sensible step in this direction. A.M.

Sleeve Note: Brubeck himself explains his inspirations for the compositions and the moods they are meant to convey. Quite interesting as far as it goes.

JAZZ DIRECTORY

Messrs. Cassell & Co. advise us that Vol. VI of this McCarthy-Carey discography is now available from the usual sources, price 12s. 6d.

★Buck Clayton and his Orchestra, Jimmy Rushing, Ada Moore

"Cat Meets Chick"

*****Any Place I Hang My Hat Is Home** (Arlen, Mercer) (VM) (*a*); **Pretty Little Baby** (S. Silvers, Bernie, P. Parker) (VR) (*a*); **I've Got A Feeling I'm Falling** (Waller, Rose, Link) (VM) (*a*); **If I Could Be With You** (J. Johnson, Creamer) (VRM) (*a*); **Ain't She Sweet?** (Ager, Yellen) (*a*); **Any Place I Hang My Hat** (VM) (*b*); **You're My Thrill** (Clare, Corney) (VM) (*b*); **Between The Devil And The Deep Blue Sea** (Arlen, Koehler) (VM) (*b*); **Gee, Baby, Ain't I Good To You?** (Redman, Razaf) (VR) (*b*); **Cool Breeze Woman** (Rushing) (VR) (*c*); **I Can't Give You Anything But Love** (McHugh, Fields) (*c*); **The Blues** (Improvised) (*c*); **Any Place I Hang My Hat** (VM) (*c*); **After You've Gone** (Layton, Creamer) (VR) (*c*); Conclusion (*c*)
(Philips 12 in. LP BBL7105—37s. 6½d.)

(*a*)—Session personnel: **Clayton** (*tpt*); **Eddie Barefield** (*alto, clt*); **Bud Johnson** (*tnr*); **Willard Brown** (*bar*); **Emmett Berry** (*tpt*); **Dickie Wells** (*tmb*); **Sir Charles Thompson** (*pno*); **Steve Jordan** (*gtr*); **Aaron Bell** (*bass*); **Jo Jones** (*drs*). Vocs.: **Ada Moore** in (VM); **Jimmy Rushing** in (VR). 18/8/1955. U.S.A. (Am. Columbia.)

(*b*)—Session personnel as for (*a*), except **Milt Hinton** (*bass*) replaces Bell. 19/8/1955. Do. (Do.)

(*c*)—Session personnel as for (*a*), except **Ken Kersey** (*pno*) replaces Thompson; **Osie Johnson** (*drs*) replaces Jones. 23/8/1955. Do. (Do.)

Note: These details differ slightly from those given in some other publications, but may be taken as correct.

Only an A & R man could be naive enough to think up the idea behind "Cat Meets Chick". The sequence of songs purports to tell a story (the usual one, of course) with a few scraps of conversation thrown in to help the narrative along. Much more pertinent is the presence of Jimmy Rushing, Ada Moore and a distinguished band of musicians.

The possessor of an unusually low contralto voice, Ada Moore sounds convincing, if a trifle demure, in the blues (*Any Place I Hang My Hat Is Home*) but is very ill-at-ease on ballads. Jimmy Rushing, on the other hand, sings with all the exuberance and fervour he showed during his recent visit to these shores. Best of all is his passionate shouting of *Cool Breeze Woman* (why the comma after "Woman" on both label and sleeve?) and his warm, affectionate interpretations of *Pretty Little Baby*, *If I Could Be With You* (a duet with Ada Moore) and Don Redman's delightful *Gee, Baby*.

Ain't She Sweet, *I Can't Give You Anything But Love* and *The Blues* are instrumental items. Plenty of doughty solo-playing can be heard on these and the other tracks. Buck Clayton is particularly relaxed and inventive, and Eddie Barefield (on alto sax, anyway), Bud Johnson, Sir Charles Thompson and Kenneth Kersey also do well. That great trombonist, Dickie Wells—too rarely heard nowadays—takes a couple of solos, but sounds oddly subdued. C.F.

Sleeve Note: Anonymous. Hopelessly trite and inadequate, giving no dates and only listing a collective personnel.

★Miles Davis All Stars

"Changes"

*****Dr. Jackle** (McLean) (*b*); **Bitty Ditty** (Thad Jones) (*a*); **Minor March** (McLean) (*b*); **Changes** (Bryant) (*a*)
(Esquire 12 in. LP 32-028—39s. 7¼d.)

(*a*)—**Davis** (*tpt*); **Milt Jackson** (*vib*); **Ray Bryant** (*pno*); **Percy Heath** (*bass*); **Art Taylor** (*drs*). 5/8/1955. U.S.A. (Am. Prestige.)

(*b*)—Same personnel, plus **Jackie McLean** (*alto*). Do. Do. (Do.)

Miles Davis flights his trumpet solos as skilfully as ever, Milt Jackson performs deftly and imaginatively. Yet this is still a disappointing record. One reason is the presence of Jackie McLean in *Dr. Jackle* and *Minor March*, both compositions of his own. Although McLean takes Charlie Parker as a model, his playing reflects only superficial aspects of Parker's style. Most of the time his solos are undisciplined, noisy gestures.

The only completely satisfying track is *Changes*, its theme written by Ray Bryant. This was almost the first recording session in which the young Philadelphian pianist had taken part. He plays soberly, with reticence, yet keeps the melodic line moving and expanding all the time. Miles Davis's muted solo, tense and sensitive, is beautifully poised. C.F.

Sleeve Note: Ira Gitler's prose is a bit choppy, but he gets all the facts straight.

★Buddy De Franco Wailers

*****Cheek To Cheek** (Berlin); **Let's Call The Whole Thing Off** (Gershwin); **Moonlight On The Ganges** (Myers, Wallace); **Angel Eyes** (Dennis, Brent); **A Fine Romance** (Kern); **Perfidia** (Dominguez); **How Long Has This Been Going On?** (Gershwin); **I Won't Dance** (Kern, McHugh); **Sweet Blues** (Edison)
(Columbia Clef 12 in. LP 33CX10091—41s. 8½d.)

De Franco (*clt*); **Harry Edison** (*tpt*); **Jimmy Rowles** (*pno*); **Barney Kessel** (*gtr*); **Bob Stone** (*bass*); **Bobby White** (*drs*). Late 1956. U.S.A. (Norman Granz.)

The Oxford Dictionary defines "wail" as a "prolonged, plaintive, inarticulate, usually high-pitched cry", while Leonard Feather in his Encyclopedia of Jazz describes the term as meaning, in its jazz sense, "to perform with inspiration".

Buddy de Franco's Wailers conform to neither description. Their music is calm and melodic, beautifully played, but hardly inspired. This is another of those "bread-and-butter" record sessions where a group of competent musicians have gathered to produce a routine, average-quality album. Nothing goes wrong; no-one plays out of tune or forgets his place in a chorus. Yet the lack of inspirational fire is apparent, especially when the proceedings are drawn out to twelve-inch LP length. Kessel and Rowles are perhaps the most inventive and interesting of the soloists. De Franco and Edison have reached, and exceeded, on numerous other occassions the levels they achieve here. It is difficult to review a record of this type with complete fairness; obviously

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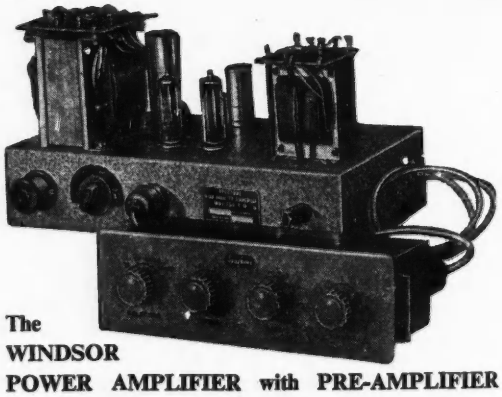

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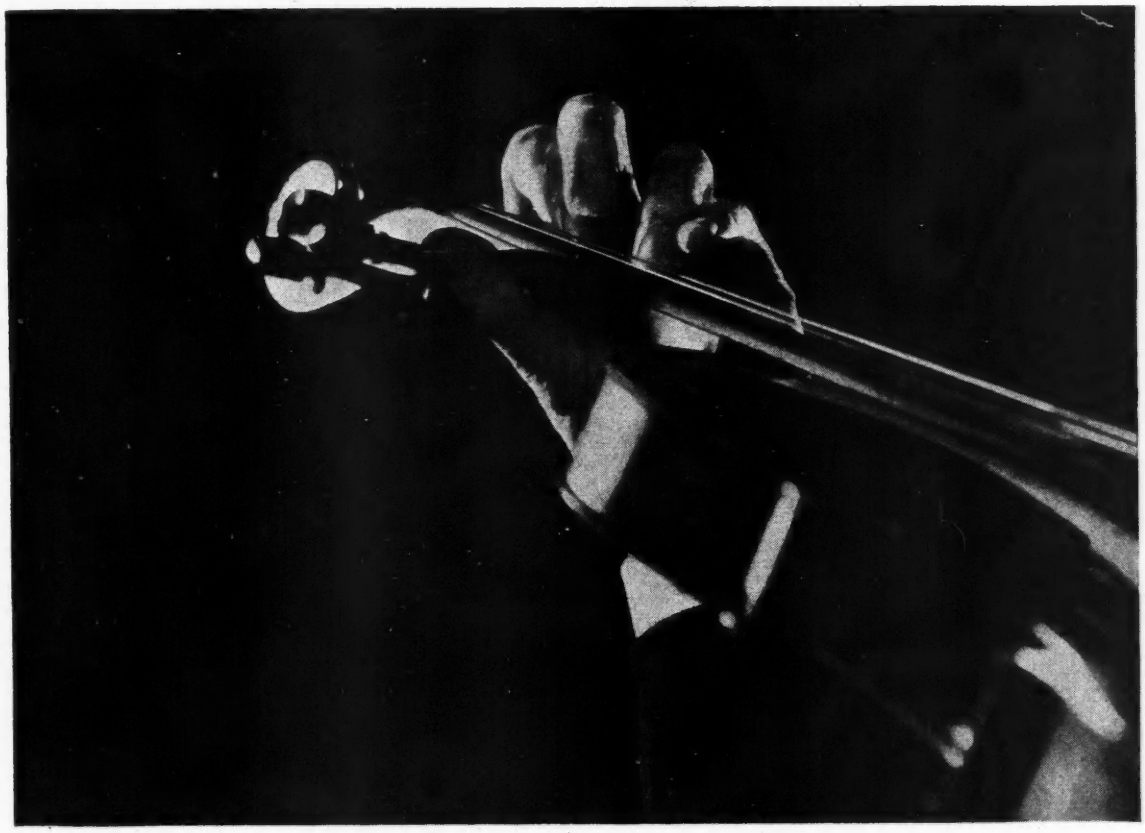

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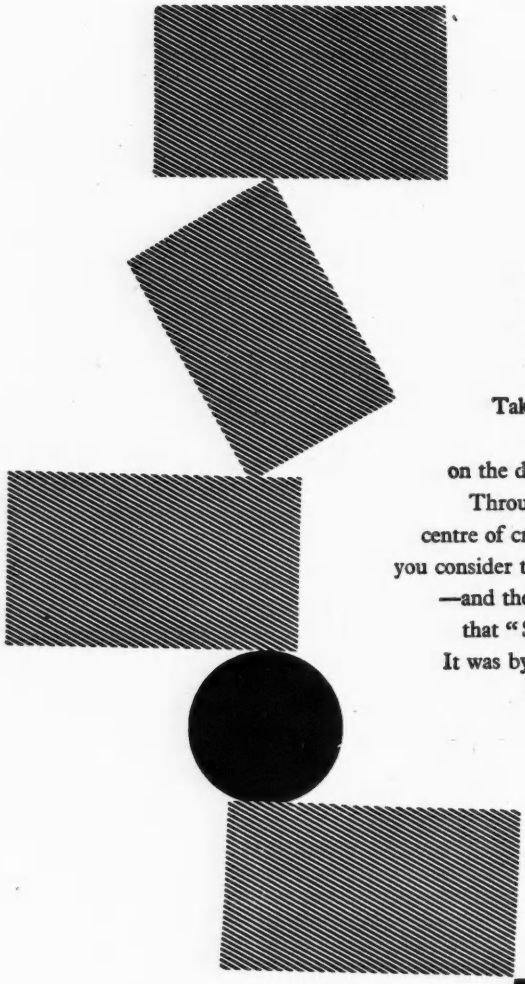

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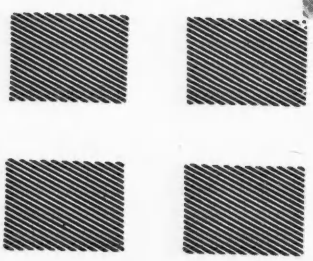

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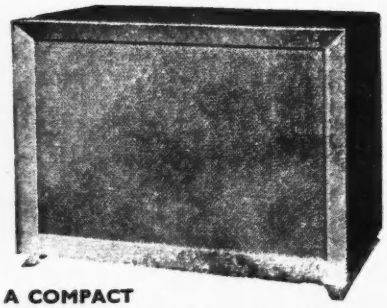

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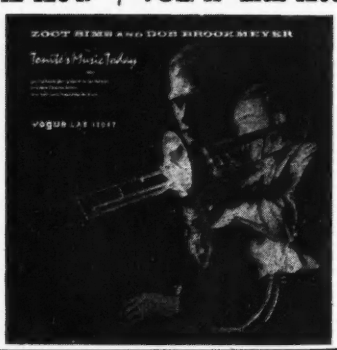

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Sleeve Note : De Franco explains how he came to take up the clarinet. Short, but as long as it need be for this one subject. No recording date.

★Wilbur De Paris New Orleans Jazz
Vol. 2

****I've Found A New Baby (Spencer Williams); **The World Is Waiting For The Sunrise** (Lockhart, Seitz); **Bourbon Street Parade** (Paul Barbarin); **In A Persian Market** (Ketelby)
(Tempo EP EXA73—13s. 7½d.)

De Paris (*tmb*); **Omer Simeon** (*clt*); **Sidney De Paris** (*tpt*); **Don Kirkpatrick** (*pno*); **Eddie Gibbs** (*bjo*); **Nat Woodley** (*bass*); **Zutty Singleton** (*drs*). Probably *circa* 1958. U.S.A. (Am. A440.)

I admit to having a feeling of well-being towards Tempo when I saw this disc, a feeling which heightened as I heard the lovely broken-rhythm effect in *Bourbon Street Parade*. When I had finished laughing at the beautiful, witty caricature of the *Persian Market*, which I might add was by *Albert* Ketélby, not Arthur as per my colleague Charles Fox's sleeve note, I turned the record over and prepared for more delights.

But alas, it was not to be. There is an amusing brass-band trombone introduction to *New Baby* from the leader, but it is taken too fast, and Zutty's cymbals obtrude over Simeon's clarinet solo. *The World Is Waiting*, though, is bounced along at such a speed that the whole meaning is spoilt, and there is far too much exhibitionist banjo work. This band is great at playing the original New Orleans idiom, and playing it better than any since the high period years ago, so it is tragic to encounter this kind of thing. Still, buy the record for the other side ; each track there is worth the money. O.K.

Sleeve Note : Charles Fox. No recording date; otherwise (except above-mentioned slip) excellent.

Wally Fawkes and his Troglodytes
****Sent For You Yesterday And Here You Come Today (Basie, Eddie Durham)
****Why Can't You Behave ? (Porter)
(Decca F-J10936, 45F-J10936—6s.)

Fawkes (*clt*); **Spike Mackintosh** (*tpt*); **Keith Christie** (*tmb*); **Ian Armit** (*pno*); **Tim Mahn** (*bass*); **Eddie Taylor** (*drs*). 24/4/1957. London. (Decca.)

Elegant British jazz of a high order ; not too modern, but not in the least archaic. The use of Ken Christie ensures the latter ! I see Humph's new pianist is with this bunch, too. The general sound is of relaxed competence, albeit a trifle cold. Choice of numbers good ; Fawkes impeccable, of course. This sort of thing makes such a change from the weary round of pseudo-New Orleans stuff churned out by people who have never been nearer to the birthplace of jazz than Southampton. At last, British jazz is finding the right road. O.K.

★Leonard Feather-Dick Hyman Orchestra
"Hi Fi Suite"

****Feedback Fugue (Feather, Hyman) (*a*); **Bass Reflex** (Feather) (*b*); **Wow** (Feather) (*d*); **Reverberation** (Feather, Hyman) (*c*); **Squawker** (Feather) (*e*); **Tweeter** (Feather, Hyman) (*c*); **Woofer** (Feather, Hyman) (*c*); **Flutter Waltz** (Feather) (*e*); **Hi-Fi-Pi** (Feather, Hyman) (*a*)
(M.G.M. 12 in. LP C762—35s. 10d.)

(*a*)—**Hyman** (*pno*); **Jerome Richardson** (*alto, piccolo*); **Frank Wess** (*tnr, flute*); **Romeo Penque** (*bar, clt*); **Joe Newman** (*tpt*); **Benny Powell** (*tmb*); **Don Elliott** (*vib., percussion*); **Oscar Pettiford** (*bass*); **Osie Johnson** (*drs*); **Feather** (*director*). 16/6/1956. U.S.A. (Am. M.G.M.)

(*b*)—**Hyman** (*pno*); **Richardson** (*alto, piccolo*); **Wess** (*tnr, flute*); **Phil Bodner** (*bar, oboe*); **Thad Jones** (*tpt*); **Powell** (*tmb*); **Pettiford** (*bass*); **Kenny Clarke** (*drs*); **Feather** (*director*). 11/7/1956. Do. (Do.)

(*c*)—Personnel as for (*b*), plus **Bill Barber** (*tuba*). Do. Do. (Do.)

(*d*), (*e*)—**Hyman** (*Hammond organ*); **Eddie Safranski** (*bass*); **Don Lamond** (*drs*). (*d*) 12/9/1956 ; (*e*) 28/9/1956 Do. (Do.)

Leonard Feather and Dick Hyman hit on an ingenious and good box office idea in this "Hi-Fi Suite". They have made it doubly sales-enticing by the way they have put it into practice. Each item in the Suite carries out to a greater or lesser extent its title, either via the composition or the instrumentation used and the way it is employed, and in some cases by both methods simultaneously. For instance, Joe Newman's growl trumpet deals with *Squawker* ; *Tweeter* is illustrated by Jerome Richardson's flute ; *Woofer* by Bill Barber's tuba ; and *Bass Reflex* by, of course, Oscar Pettiford's bass. *Feedback* is conveyed by way of a fugal composition. (Get it ?—if not look at the sleeve note.)

Probably in response to American M.G.M. dictates (past experiences suggest that they have yet to become fully jazz-minded) the whole thing is light in texture, uninvolved in orchestration and performance. But Dick Hyman and the always efficient (even when he does tend to put his tongue in his cheek) Leonard Feather have produced some very listenable tunes. Also they appear to have done a Nelson when soloists have got going a little more ambitiously than may have been intended, with the result that we get some restrained but first-rate jazz from Frank Wess, Joe Newman, Benny Powell, Don Elliott and Oscar Pettiford, not to mention also Mr. Hyman himself, in what is at all times a most musicianly performed album. E.J.

Sleeve Note : Leonard Feather and Dick Hyman. Recording dates not given, otherwise excellent. After explaining their objective and method of collaboration, Feather and Hyman proceed to deal with each title individually, telling, among other things, the technical meaning of each word chosen for an item title, the procedure it suggested and why, and how it is put into effect.

★Erroll Garner
"Wizard Of The Ivories"

****The Petite Waltz Bounce (La Petite Valse) (Heyne) (*a*); **Love Me Or Leave Me** (Walter Donaldson) (*b*); **St. Louis Blues** (Handy) (*c*); **Lullaby Of Birdland** (Shearing) (*d*)
(Philips EP BBE12084—12s. 10½d.)

(*a*)—**Garner** (*pno*); **John Simmons** (*bass*); **Shadow Wilson** (*drs*). 7/10/1950. U.S.A. (Am. Columbia.)

(*b*)—**Garner** (*pno*). 29/10/1952. Do. (Do.)

(*c*), (*d*)—**Garner** (*pno*); **Wyatt Ruther** (*bass*); **Eugene M. "Fats" Heard** (*drs*). 30/3/1955. Do. (Do.)

Previous issues (†deleted): (*b*) BBR8045 (*d*) PB250†, BBR8048, BBL7078.

Four representative, therefore good, solos by one of jazz's most influential pianists. Johnny Heyne's *Petite Waltz* was something of a commercial sensation when it was recorded ; the appearance seven years later of Garner's *Bounce* version (he also recorded a "straight" interpretation of the tune at the same session) is therefore somewhat anachronic. The solo *Love Me Or Leave Me* (incidentally the harmonic foundation for George Shearing's *Lullaby Of Birdland*) is a fine example of Erroll's keyboard command and should not be missed. A.M.

Sleeve Note : Personnels and recording dates only—and that's better than a lot of useless blah !

★Johnny Guarnieri Swing Men
****These Foolish Things (Maschwitz); **Exercise In Swing** (Guarnieri); **Salute To Fats** (Guarnieri); **Basie English** (Young)
(London EP EZ-C19018—13s. 7½d.)

Guarnieri (*pno*); **Hank D'Amico** (*clt*); **Lester Young** (*tnr*); **Billy Butterfield** (*tpt*); **Dexter Hall** (*gtr*); **Billy Taylor** (*bass*); **Cosy Cole** (*drs*). 18/4/1944. New York. (Am. Savoy.)

These four tracks come from "Blue Lester", a Savoy LP featuring some of Lester Young's most imaginative playing. Contractual difficulties have stopped London issuing the entire record, but this EP makes a very rewarding extract.

Although the recording dates back to 1944 and the reproduction is far from perfect, these are virile, exciting performances. Young dominates everything, of course—sometimes meditative (*These Foolish Things*) at others tracing a leaping, angular pattern.

Billy Butterfield seems to have faded out of jazz lately. It is good to be reminded how well he could play, his tone rich and warm, his phrasing fluent and melodic.

Johnny Guarnieri might be called a jazz chameleon. No pianist could be more versatile. In *Salute To Fats* and *Exercise In Swing* he sounds like Fats Waller, in *Basie Line* like Count Basie, while in *These Foolish Things* he models his playing on Teddy Wilson's. C.F.

Sleeve Note : Peter Gammond. Competently written and well laid out.

★Hampton Hawes
"Vol. 1.—The Trio"

*****I Got Rhythm (Gershwin); **What Is This Thing Called Love ?** (Cole Porter); **Blues The Most** (Hawes); **So In Love** (Porter); **Feelin' Fine** (Hawes); **Hamp's Blues** (Hawes); **Easy Living** (Leo Robin, Ralph Rainger); **All The Things You Are** (Jerome Kern); **These Foolish Things** (Eric Maschwitz); **Carioca** (Vincent Youmans)
(Contemporary 12 in. LP LAC12056—38s. 3d.)

Hawes (*pno*); **Red Mitchell** (*bass*); **Chuck Thompson** (*drs*). 28/6/1955. Los Angeles. (Am Contemporary.)

Hampton Hawes is the most exciting new pianist to emerge in the last few years. Stemming from the Bud Powell tradition, his keyboard style is as invigorating as it is aggressive. Unlike too many of his contemporaries, Hawes uses both hands in an intelligent manner and succeeds in swinging hard at almost all tempos. Supported by the superb bass playing of Red Mitchell and the apt accompanying drumming of Chuck Thompson, Hawes produces intense piano jazz deeply rooted in the blues.

He acknowledges Powell as an innovator in his field, but stoutly maintains that his solo style was influenced more by Charlie Parker than any pianist. This is certainly borne out in his work here where he displays some of Parker's brilliance in dazzling runs and beautifully played double-tempo passages. This is one of the best piano records of recent years, and there are two similar albums yet to appear on the Vogue label. A.M.

Sleeve Note : By Lester Koenig. In common with nearly all the Contemporary albums notes, it is a model of completeness and presentation. Background information about the sessions and technical information support clearly out discographical details.

★"History of Jazz"
"Vol. 1—N'Orleans Origins"

****Sonny Terry : **Whoopin' The Blues** (Terry) (*h*) **Mount Zion Church Choir : He's The Lily Of The Valley** (Trad.) (*i*) **Huddie "Leadbelly" Ledbetter : Eagle Rock Rag** (Ledbetter) (*c*) **Zutty Singleton's Trio : Lulu's Mood** (Fred C. Washington) (*b*) **Lizzie Miles : Bill Bailey, Won't You Please Come Home** (Hughie Cannon) (*j*) **Eddie Miller's Quartet : Cajun Love Song** (Wrightman, Verret, Miller) (*d*) **Bugle Sam De Kemel : Runain' Wild** (Gibbs, Grey, Wood) (*k*) **Armand Hug's Louisianans : A Dixie Jam Session** (Hug) (*i*) **Blue Lou Barker :** Trombone Man Blues (Bobby Black) (*f*) **Sharkey And His Band : That Da Da Strain** (Dowell, Medina) (*g*) **Wingy Manone's Dixieland Band : Tailgate Ramble** (Manone, Mercer) (V) (*a*) **Nappy Lamare's Levee Loungers : High Society** (Steele, Melrose) (*e*)
(Capitol 12 in. T793—38s. 8½d.)

(*a*)—**Manone** (*tpt, voc*); **Metty Matlock** (*clt*); **Jack Flores, Abe Lincoln, Floyd O'Brien** (*tmbs*); **Stan Wrightsman** (*pno*); **Nappy Lamare** (*gtr*); **Phil Stephens** (*bass*); **Zutty Singleton** (*drs*); **Johnny Mercer** (*voc*). 7/8/1944. Hollywood. (Am. Capitol.)

Stephens (*bass*); **Zutty Singleton** (*drs*). 7/8/1944. Hollywood. (A. Capitol.)

(*b*)—**Singleton** (*drs*); **Barney Bigard** (*clt*); **Fred Washington** (*pno*). 30/6/1944. Los Angeles. Do.)

(*c*)—**Ledbetter** (*pno, voc*). 27/10/1944. Hollywood. (Do.)

(*d*)—**Miller** (*clt*); **Stan Wrightsman** (*pno*); **Nappy Lamare** (*gtr*); **Bud Hatch** (*bass*); **Ray Bauduc** (*drs*); **Irving Verret** (*voc*). 27/1/1945. Hollywood. (Do.)

(*e*)—Personnel as for (*d*), plus **Wingy Manone** (*tpt*); **Verret** plays *tmb*. Do. Do. (Do.)

(*f*)—**Blue Lou Barker** (*voc*) acc. by **Danny Barker** (*gtr.*) unidentified *clt, saxes, tpt, tmb, pno, bass, drs.* Possibly *circa* 1947. U.S.A. (Do.)

(*g*)—**Sharkey Bonano** (*tpt*); **Lester Bouchon** (*clt*); **Santo Pecora** (*tmb*); **Monk Hasel** (*mello-*

phone); **Jeff Riddick** (*pno*); **Chink Martin** (*tuba*); **Charlie Duke** (*drs*). 27/10/1949. New Orleans. (Do.)

(*h*)—**Terry Saunders** (*harmonica*); **Granville McShee** (*gtr*). Possibly *circa* early 1950's. U.S.A. (Do.)

(*i*)—**Hug** (*pno*,); **Leonard "Bujie" Centobie** (*clt*); **George Girard** (*tpt*); **Santo Pecora** (*tmb*); **John Senac** (*bass*); **Fred King** (*drs*). Possibly *circa* early 1950's. New Orleans. (Do.)

(*j*)—**Lizzie Miles** (*voc*) with **Sharkey Kings Of Dixieland: Sharkey Bonano** (*cornet*); **Centobie** (*clt*); **Jack Delaney** (*tmb*); **Stan Mendelson** (*pno*); **Arthur Pons** (*gtr*); **Joe Loyacano** (*bass*); **Arthur 'Monk" Hazel** (*drs*). 25/6/1952. New Orleans. (Do.)

(*k*)—**Matthew De Kemel** (*tpt initator, voc*); **Centobie** (*clt*); **Bonano** (*cornet*); **Jack Delaney** (*tmb*); **Mendelson** (*pno*); **Loya Cano** (*bass*); **Albert Brunies** (*drs*). Possibly *circa* 1952. U.S.A. (Do.)

(*l*)—**Rev. R. A. Daniels** (*voc*); **Dave Cavanaugh** (*pno*) with singing by members of the church congregation. Date untraced. Santa Monica, California, during an actual religious service. (Do.)

Previous issues: (*a*) Capitol CL13327; (*c*) CL13282; (*j*) CL13736 (as Hug's New Orleans Jazzmen); (*b*), (*d*), (*c*) inc. in LC6508; (*j*) inc. in LP T792.

This is the first of a four-disc series, compiled by Dave Dexter, former editor of "Down Beat", that is now being issued here at the rate of one disc every two months. It is a revised and augmented version of Dexter's 1945 "History" issued here early in 1951 on now deleted Capitol LC6507, LC6508, LC6520 and LC6527.

My criticisms of it are mainly due to its title. Surely anything claiming to be a History should cover its subject from start to finish. At any rate, that is what my Oxford Concise Dictionary implies. Capitol Records Inc. did not come into existence until 1942, so they have no records made prior to that date. For this "N' Orleans Origins" start they have used a number of stock recordings which, although none was made earlier than about 1944, are by artists who hailed from New Orleans or who were recognised as understanding exponents of its early jazz. But it is inevitable that in the intervening years those who had lived and worked mainly in more Northern parts of the U.S. should have become influenced by the developments in jazz that were taking place there, and that is indeed what this LP shows was happening to some of them, such as Eddie Miller, Wingy Manone, Nappy Lamare and the sidemen who are heard here with them.

If only the series had been given some such title as "Insights Into Jazz" or "Jazz—Ancient To Modern" it—or at any rate this first volume of it (I have not yet heard any of the others)—would have evoked my unstinted praise. For it is a well-varied collection, and while much of its contents today are mainly of academic interest, they still have the entertainment quality that attaches to anything that can be described as informative, picturesque or quaint, no matter whether it is old or new.

E.J.

Sleeve Note: Dave Dexter makes a valiant attempt to give personnels for and describe each item. But, with a dozen to deal with in the space available on the back of a 12 in. sleeve, he tends to fall between the two stools.

★Billie Holiday

"Lady Sings The Blues"

****Lady Sings the Blues** (Holiday, Nichols) (*a*); **Trav'lin' Light** (Mundy, Mercer) (*a*); **I Must Have That Man** (Jimmy McHugh, Dorothy Fields) (*a*); **Some Other Spring** (Kitchings, Herzog) (*a*); **Strange Fruit** (Allan) (*a*); **No Good Man** (Higginbotham, Fisher, Gallop) (*a*); **God Bless The Child** (Holiday, Herzog) (*a*); **Good Morning Heartache** (Higginbotham, Drake, Fisher) (*a*); **Love Me Or Leave Me** (Donaldson, Kahn) (*c*); **Stormy Blues** (Holiday (*d*); **Too Marvellous For Words** (Whiting, Mercer) (*b*); **Willow Weep For Me** (Ronell) (*d*); **I Thought About You** (Van Heusen, Mercer) (*e*)

(Columbia Clef 12 in. LP 33CX10092—41s. 8½d.)

Billie Holiday (*voc*) acc. by:

(*a*)—**Tony Scott** (*clt, director, arr.*); **Paul Quinichette** (*tnr*); **Charlie Shavers** (*tpt*); **Wynton Kelly** (*pno*); **Kenny Burrel** (*gtr*); **Aaron Bell** (*bass*); **Lennie McBrowne** (*drs*). Summer, 1956. U.S.A. (Am. Norman Granz.)

(*b*)—**Willie Smith** (*alto*); **Harry Edison** (*tpt*); **Bobby Tucker** (*pno*); **Red Callender** (*bass*); **Chico Hamilton** (*drs*). Do. Do. (Do.)

(*c*)—**Tucker** (*pno*). Do. Do. (Do.)

Previous issues: (*c*), (*e*) Columbia Clef LB10020; (*d*) LB10030.

Billie Holiday—at her best the greatest and most profoundly moving of all jazz singers—can sometimes sound excruciatingly bad. Half of this LP is good—by no means Billie Holiday's best work, but still memorable. Billie Holiday's best work, but still memorable. The other half is dreadful—off-pitch much of the time, the voice tired and slurring.

Lady Sings The Blues, Trav'lin' Light, I Must Have That Man, Some Other Spring, Strange Fruit and *No Good Man*—on all these tracks Billie creates the tension she strives for. Her voice may be rougher than it used to be, but her timing and wry, sardonic way of phrasing sound just as effective as ever. Only the unsympathetic clarinet-playing of Tony Scott really mars these performances.

In *God Bless The Child, Good Morning Heartache* and the remaining four titles Billie's grip has slackened. The result is grotesque, a caricature of her singing, all its qualities exaggerated and none of them reconciled. The rugged, weary phrasing on *Stormy Blues* (its tune the same as *Billie's Blues*) is moving in the same rather frightening way as Charlie Parker's recording of *Lover Man*. Despite the excellent supporting musicians, these final tracks can only distress all admirers of this great singer. C.F.

Sleeve Note: Anonymous. Undistinguished; no dates given.

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★Milt Jackson

"Wizard Of The Vibes"

******I'll Remember April** (Raye, De Paul, Johnston) (*b*); **Jay Jay Blues** (J. J. Johnson) (*b*); **There's No You** (Hopper) (*b*); **Jerry Old Man** (Renaud) (*b*); **Out Of Nowhere** (Johnny Green) (*b*); **If I Had You** (Ted Shapiro) (*b*); **Indiana** (Hanley) (*a*)

(Vogue 12 in. LP LAE12046—38s. 3d.)

(*a*)—**Jackson** (*pno*); **J. J. Johnson** (*tmb*); **Percy Heath** (*bass*); **Charlie Smith** (*drs*). 7/3/1954. New York. (French Vogue.)

French pianist Henri Renaud spent an extended holiday in New York during the early part of 1954 and took the opportunity of making some records there with the then best available American jazzmen. Vogue has already issued four of these titles under Renaud's name (on Vogue LDE088). On this new LP they are reissued, with *Indiana, If I Had You* and *Out of Nowhere*, under the by-line "Milt Jackson—Wizard Of The Vibes," a questionable alteration on ethical grounds.

Musically these records fall into the category of the jam session, for the various tracks consist of solo sequences with little attempt at ensemble work. Jackson is brilliant either on ballads (*There's No You*) or on the up-tempo numbers (*I'll Remember April* etc.). Johnson and Cohn perform at only a little below their best form, Renaud plays his part well both as a sympathetic accompanist and as a somewhat retiring, reserved soloist. Heath is a dependable tower of strength and is given the task of introducing the melody on *Nowhere*. Charles Smith, late of the Billy Taylor Trio, is an unadventurous, but capable technician. E.J.

Sleeve Note: Alun Morgan again. *Verb Sap.*

★"Jazz Britannia"

*****½Joe Harriott Quartet** (*b*)—**Blue Original** (Harriott); **My Heart Belongs To Daddy** (Porter)

*****½Don Rendell Quartet** (*a*)—**Juno** (Rendell); **Don't Get Around Much Anymore** (Ellington)

(M.G.M. EP EP615—11s. 1½d.)

(*a*)—**Rendell** (*tnr*); **Damian Robinson** (*pno*); **Sammy Stokes** (*bass*); **Don Lawson** (*drs*). 5/7/1956. London. (Denis Preston.)

(*b*)—**Harriott** (*alto*); **Johnny Weed** (*pno*); **Dave Goldberg** (*drs*); **Major Holley** (*bass*); **Phil Seamen** (*drs*). 7/71956. Do. (Do.)

Although over-recorded in comparison with the rhythm section (note especially the lack of string-bass tone) Joe Harriott continues to show up as one of Britain's most inspiring Charlie Parker disciples as he wails the blues, swings at a brisker tempo through the wartime "pop" *My Heart Belongs To Daddy*. Or at least he swings during the middle part of this Cole Porter's tune. In the first and last choruses he does little more than state the theme, showing what an uninspiring melody it is for jazz treatment. The rest of the track, however, shows that at any rate the harmonies make as good a foundation for jazz improvisation as most other sequences. Good solos by Damian Robinson, revealing him as having an original outlook, help materially. There are also bass and drums spots—as musicianly and as superfluous as these things usually are!

The same unfortunate recording balance tends to make also Don Rendell sound too loud for his accompaniment. But throughout the invitingly paced *Juno* he again proves that he is probably the best of our modern-style jazz tenor saxists. In *Get Around* he is not so successful. His first chorus is a pretty dull, and at times also rather clumsy, exposition of the theme (why is it that so few of even the best jazz men can't play a simple straight melody?) and the later developments suggest that Rendell is not always at his best at the slower tempi. In fact, best part of the item is the piano solo by Johnny Weed, who does well also in Rendell's *Juno*. E.J.

Sleeve Note: Anonymous. No personnel, no date; just a few biographical details about Harriott and Rendell. Looks as though the annotator was forced to write without having even heard the record. All in all a poor effort.

★"Jazz From Sweden"

*****Straight Talk** (Wallin) (*b*); **Coquette** (Lombardo) (*f*); **There'll Never Be Another You** (Harry Warren) (*e*); **In A Little Spanish Town** (Wayne, Lewis, Young) (*d*); **Yesterdays Jerome Kern**) (*a*); **Body and Soul** (Green) (*b*); **Please Don't Talk About Me When I'm Gone** (Clare, Stept) (*c*); **I've Found A New Baby** (Spencer Williams) (*e*); **Blue And Misty** (Hallberg) (*f*); **Staffan Stalledrang** (Swedish Trad.) (*d*)

(Philips 12 in. LP BBL7102—37s. 6½d.)

(a)—**Bengt Hallberg** (*pno*); **Gunnar Johnsson** (*bass*); **Gunnar Olsson** (*drs*). 7/12/1955. Europa Film Studios, Stockholm. (Swedish Philips.)

(*b*)—**Carl-Henrik Norin** (*tnr*); **Bengt-Arne Wallin** (*tpt*); **Ake Persson** (*tmb*); **Hallberg** (*pno*); **Rune Gustafsson** (*gtr*); **Johnsson** (*bass*); **Olsson** (*drs*). Do. Do. (Do.)

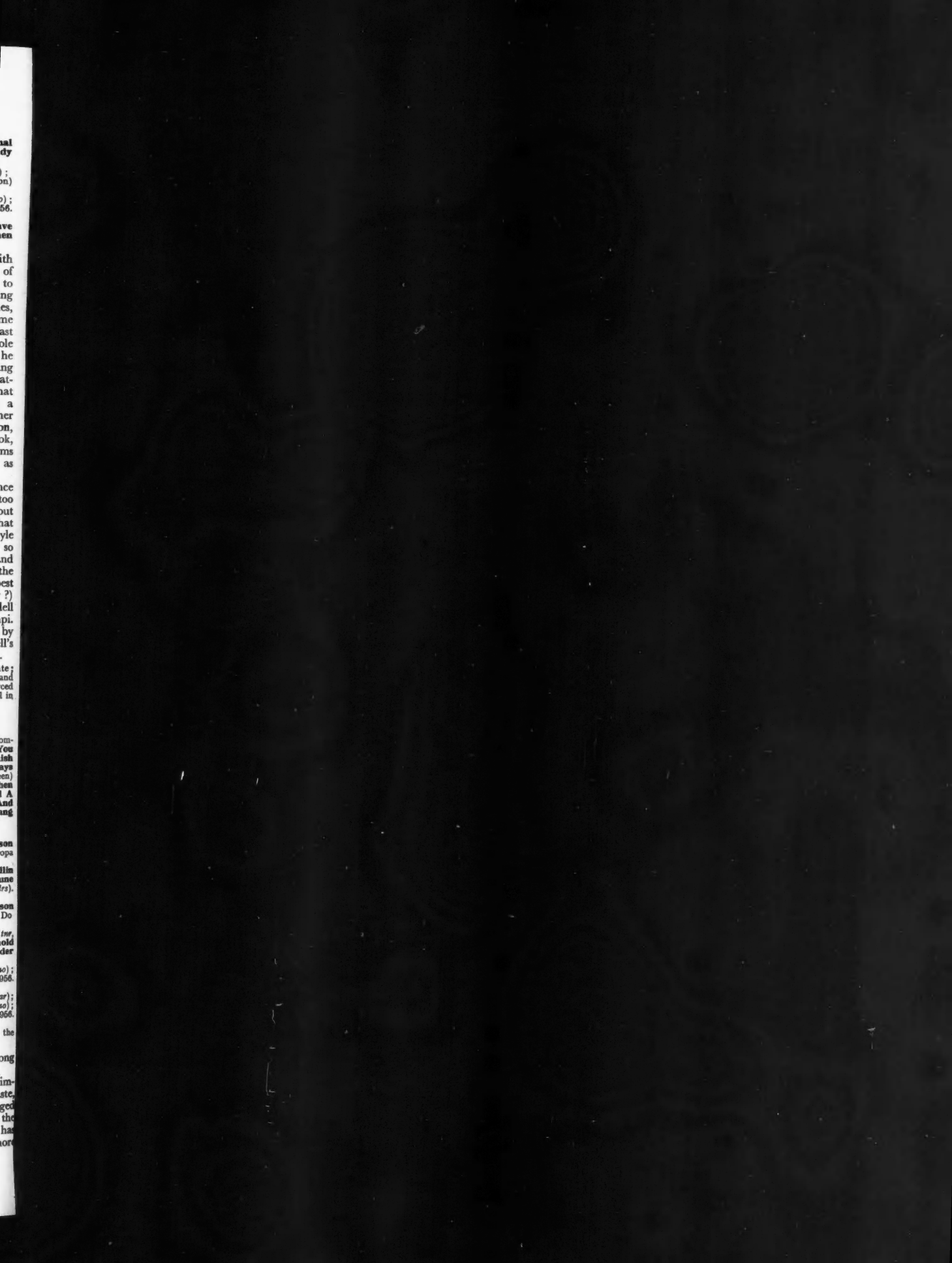
(*c*)—**Knud Jorgenssen** (*pno*); **Bengt Karisson** (*bass*); **Nils-Bertil Dahlander** (*drs*). 4/4/1956. Do (Do.)

(*d*)—**Arne Domnerus** (*alto*); **Rolf Blomqvist** (*tnr, flute*); **Wallin** (*tpt*); **Persson** (*tmb*); **Reinhold Svensson** (*pno*); **George Riedel** (*bass*); **Dahlander** (*drs*). 10/4/1956. Do. (Do.)

(*e*)—**Willy Lundin** (*alto*); **Jan Johansson** (*pno*); **Riedel** (*bass*); **Kenneth Fagerlund** (*drs*). 14/4/1956. Dl. (Do.)

(*f*)—**Arne Lind** (*clt*); **Lennart Jabsson** (*bar*); **Wallin** (*tpt*); **Persson** (*tmb*); **Hallberg** (*pno*); **Johnsson** (*bass*); **Anders Burman** (*drs*). 20/4/1956. Do. (Do.)

The spelling of these names differs from that on the sleeve, but is believed to be correct.

New names from Sweden join those long familiar from various Esquire records.

The Swedes still have the same unimpeachable musicianship and impeccable taste, but in other respects their music has changed very noticeably. Their love of bop and the "cool" approach that it brought with it has been replaced by reversion to rather more